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ENGLISH
ESSAYS
OF TO-DAY



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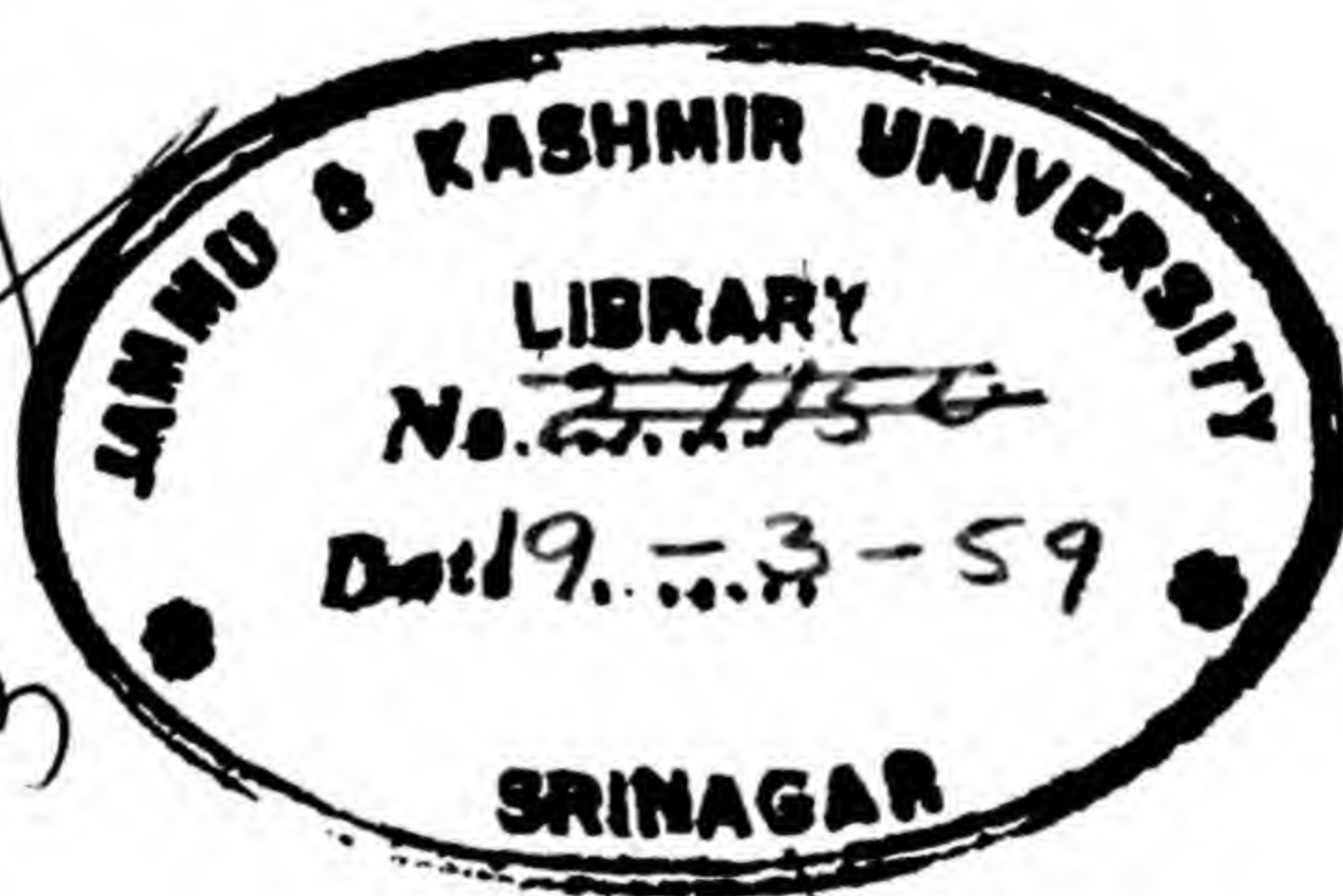


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PREFACE

ENGLISH ESSAYS OF TO-DAY completes the series of volumes of work by contemporary writers which the English Association began with the two volumes of *Poems of To-day* and followed with *Prose of To-day*, and it is intended as a companion volume to these collections.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to give a precise definition of an Essay. The word itself, 'essay' or 'attempt', reveals how incomplete an art-form it is. In this collection the term has been interpreted widely to cover the review, the leading article, the formal gossip, the pamphlet, the treatise, and the biographical sketch.

With a few exceptions the Essays have been selected from the works of living writers. As they cover a wide range of matter within a short length of time they have been arranged in alphabetical order of the writers.

The thanks of the English Association are due to the chosen writers for their generous help in making this volume possible. The amount of material available is so large that the task of selection was very difficult, and limits of space account for the absence of some whose work might be expected to be included. In one or two instances it was not possible to obtain the necessary co-operation of the authors or publishers.

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ALPHA OF THE PLOUGH

‘W. G.’

From PEBBLES ON THE SHORE

THE worst of spending week-ends in the country in these anxious days is the difficulty of getting news. About six o'clock on Saturday evening I am seized with a furious hunger. What has happened on the East front? What on the West? What in Serbia? Has Greece made up its heroic mind? Is Rumania still trembling on the brink? What does the French communiqué say? These and a hundred other questions descend on me with frightful insistence. Clearly I can't go to bed without having them answered. But there is not an evening paper to be got nearer than the little railway station in the valley two miles away, and there is no way of getting it except by Shanks's mare. And so, unable to resist the glamour of *The Star*, I start out across the fields for the station.

As I stood on the platform last Saturday evening devouring the latest war news under the dim oil lamp, a voice behind me said, in broad rural accent, ‘Bill, I say, W. G. is dead.’ At the word I turned hastily to another column and found the news that had stirred him. And even in the midst of world-shaking events it stirred me too. For a brief moment I forgot the war and was back in that cheerful world where we used to be happy, where we greeted the rising sun with light hearts and saw its setting without fear. In that cheerful world I can hardly recall a time when a big man with a black beard was not my King.

I first saw him in the 'seventies. I was a small boy then, and I did him the honour of playing truant—'playing wag' we called it. I felt that the occasion demanded it. To have the god of my idolatry in my own little town and not to pay him my devotions—why, the idea was almost like blasphemy. A half-dozen, or even a dozen, from my easily infuriated master would be a small price to pay. I should take the stripes as a homage to the hero. He would never know, but I should be proud to suffer in his honour. Unfortunately, there was a canvas round the field where the hero played, and as the mark of the Mint was absent from my pockets I was on the wrong side of the canvas. But I knew a spot where by lying flat on your stomach and keeping your head very low you could see under the canvas and get a view of the wicket. It was not a comfortable position, but I saw the King. I think I was a little disappointed that there was nothing supernatural about his appearance and that there were no portents in the heavens to announce his coming. It didn't seem quite right somehow. In a general way I knew he was only a man, but I was quite prepared to see something tremendous happen, the sun to dance or the earth to heave, when he appeared. I never felt the indifference of Nature to the affairs of men so acutely.

I saw him many times afterwards, and I suppose I owe more undiluted happiness to him than to any man that ever lived. For he was the genial tyrant in a world that was all sunshine. There are other games, no doubt, which will give you as much exercise and pleasure in playing them as cricket, but there is no game that fills the mind with such memories and seems enveloped in such a gracious and kindly atmosphere. If you have

once loved it and played it, you will find talk in it enough 'for the wearing out of six fashions' as Falstaff says. I like a man who has cricket in his soul. I find I am prejudiced in his favour, and am disposed to disbelieve any ill about him. I think my affection for Jorkins began with the discovery that he, like myself, saw that astounding catch with which Ulyett dismissed Bonnor in the Australian match at Lord's in 1883—or was it 1884? And when to this mutual and immortal memory we added the discovery that we were both at the Oval at the memorable match when Crossland rattled Surrey out like ninepins and the crowd mobbed him, and Key and Roller miraculously pulled the game out of the fire, our friendship was sealed.

The fine thing about a wrangle on cricket is that there is no bitterness in it. When you talk about politicians you are always on the brink of bad temper. When you disagree about the relative merits of W. B. Yeats or Francis Thompson you are afflicted with scorn for the other's lack of perception. But you may quarrel about cricketers and love each other all the time. For example, I am prepared to stand up in a truly Christian spirit to the bowling of anybody in defence of my belief that—next to him of the black beard—Lohmann was the most naturally gifted all-round cricketer there has ever been. What grace of action he had, what an instinct for the weak spot of his opponent, what a sense for fitting the action to the moment; above all, what a gallant spirit he played the game in! And that, after all, is the real test of the great cricketer. It is the man who brings the spirit of adventure into the game that I want. Of the Quaifes and the Scottons and the Barlows I have nothing but dreary memories. They do not mean cricket to me.

And even Shrewsbury and Hayward left me cold. They were too faultily faultless, too icily regular for my taste. They played cricket not as though it was a game, but as though it was a proposition in Euclid. And I don't like Euclid.

It was the hearty joyousness that 'W. G.' shed around him that made him so dear to us youngsters of all ages. I will admit, if you like, that Ranjitsinhji at his best was more of a magician with the bat, that Johnny Briggs made you laugh more with his wonderful antics and comic genius, that A. P. Lucas had more finish, Palairet more grace, and so on. But it was the abundance of the old man with the black beard that was so wonderful. You never came to the end of him. He was like a generous roast of beef—you could cut and come again, and go on coming. Other men flitted across our sky like meteors, but he shone on like the sun in the heavens, and like the sun in the heavens he scattered largesse over the land. He did not seem so much a man as an institution, a symbol of summer and all its joys, a sort of Father Christmas clothed in flannels and sunshine. It did you good merely to look at him. It made you feel happy to see such a huge capacity for enjoyment, such mighty subtlety, such ponderous gaiety. It was as though Jove, or Vulcan, or some other god of antiquity had come down to play games with the mortals. You would not have been much surprised if, when the shadows lengthened across the greensward and the umpire signalled that the day's play was done, he had wrapped himself in a cloud of glory and floated away to Olympus.

And now he is gone indeed, and it seems as though a part, and that a very happy part, of life has gone with

him. When sanity returns to the earth there will arise other deities of the cricket field, but not for me. Never again shall I recapture the unsullied joy that came with the vision of the yellow cap flaming above the black beard, of the Herculean frame and the mighty bared arms, and all the godlike apparition of the master. As I turned out of the little station and passed through the fields and climbed the hill I felt that the darkness that has come upon the earth in these days had taken a deeper shade of gloom, for even the lights of the happy past were being quenched.

MAURICE BARING

Eton

From LOST LECTURES

BISMARCK once said that, however much the Germans might profess to dislike and to despise the English, there was not a German that would not be secretly pleased to be taken for an Englishman.

I believe it to be also true that there is not an Englishman who would be annoyed to be taken for an Etonian, however deep his conviction may be that Eton is a nursery of snobs or half-wits, that Rugby is more clever, and Harrow more tunefully vociferous.

I knew one boy who disliked Eton when he was there, and said so. I have known several who said they had disliked it afterwards. I know some who dislike it now. I have read and heard denunciations of Eton, attacks on Eton, abuse of Eton, satires on Eton, laughter at Eton, and kind patronizing of Eton, striking the note of—

Eton, with all thy faults I love thee still.

It was the faults I liked best. These attacks and arraignments, and this condescending approval, have always struck me as being of the same kind as those made upon other memorable institutions, and I have no doubt that Eton, which has weathered so much violent disapproval and so much intolerable patronage, will even survive the unflinching satire of these younger critics who no doubt feel that they are obeying the stern call of duty when casting a blot, as a former Headmaster would have said, on the fair fame of their *Alma Mater*.

I cannot deal with the experiences of others. I can only deal with my own. I haven't the slightest pretence of impartiality, nor the slightest desire to see the question steadily, and, seeing it whole, I am a violent, an unblushing, an unrepentant partisan. About my own experiences and my own feelings with regard to Eton I have no doubt whatsoever. I enjoyed Eton wholeheartedly and unreservedly: I enjoyed it all from the first to the last moment. If I had my life to live over again, I should like all that piece back with nothing left out; not even failing twice to pass in swimming; not even my one white ticket for cheeking Mr. Ploetz; nor my row with Mr. Cockshott about carving my name on the desk with somebody else's knife—on the desk of the schoolroom—and denying it in the face of all evidence and sticking to my denial, unshaken by cross-examination: nor my anxiety when Dunglass and I were told that in fun we had broken W——'s leg, and that he might die.

My partiality on the subject of Eton is as sharp as my impartiality on the subject of the Universities is serene and unbounded. I do not want Harrow to win the Eton and Harrow match either this year, next year or ever. I do not believe that any other school is as good as Eton—not nearly as good. I do not believe that Eton is quite different now from what it used to be, I believe that Eton is just the same; but even if she is not, even if she has changed for the worse, I believe her to be better than any other school. But I repeat I do not believe Eton has changed: I believe that Eton has been and always will be the best school, and that there is none like her, none.

I do not deny that Eton affords infinite scope for an idle boy to be idle and wide opportunity for a bad boy to be bad; but is this untrue of other schools?

In one respect I happen by circumstance, and not by inclination, to be an impartial judge. This needs some explanation which touches the core and kernel of Eton life.

They toil at games, they play with books:
They love the winner of the race,

wrote an Eton poet.

It was true. It is true. Quite true. Games at Eton are all-important. The boys like games: and both boys and masters think that games are more important than anything else. There are exceptions, but they, as usual, prove that there is no rule without exceptions. A boy would be thought more important for making a hundred at Lord's than for winning the Newcastle scholarship; for stroking the Eight at Henley than for being Captain of the Oppidans and winning all the prizes that are to be won, including the senior drawing prize. Reams of paper have been written about this, and oceans of ink have been wasted over the topic: many have deplored the fact, and still deplore the fact; they call it snobbish. The spirit of games has been spoilt, they say, and made professional. Moralists have pointed out the sad fact that on Sundays in chapel the boys are taught to turn the other cheek, not to compete, to like the lowest place best. On Monday morning until Saturday evening they are told to strain every nerve to take the highest place, to compete with every nerve in their bodies, to aim at the highest place for the House, for the school, and for themselves, in every direction and in every respect, all day and in every way. This may be sad, this may be paradoxical, this may be deplorable, but it is a fact, and the boys pay no heed to what is said on Sunday, and a great deal of attention to what is being done during the

week. To deplore this contradiction is to miss the point, which is this: Is it or is it not a mistake that the standard of excellence and success at Eton is athletic and not intellectual or aesthetic, seeing that it has to inspire and control the ideals of boys? I say emphatically that it is not a mistake. Imagine it otherwise. Imagine what would happen if the contrary were true.

Supposing the standard of success among the boys were intellectual and aesthetic; supposing the winners of the Hervey prize for English verse, and the Jelf prize for Latin verse, were hoisted, and that the winner of the Brinkman divinity prize could go into stick-ups without further ado, and that the winner of the drawing prize could wear a white waistcoat on Sundays and walk the wrong side of the street, and turn down the collar of his greatcoat, whereas the Captain of the Eleven could only wear a scug's cap, and a Captain of the Boats would not be allowed to wear white flannels; what would be the result? Insufferable priggishness on the part of the few, unutterable boredom on the part of the many, and universal slackness. Can any one doubt it?

The beauty of the existing system is that the worship and importance of games gives those who do not excel in games, or who are fond, if not of study, of books, the leisure and the opportunity to cultivate their own tastes. They are allowed to go their own way unobserved and undisturbed: they are not interfered with. They do as they like, where they like. A boy can spend hours in the school library reading *Monte Cristo* if he wants to. Nobody cares. But supposing every one cared and thought it a disgrace not to like Pindar, nobody would be allowed to read *Monte Cristo* or Sherlock Holmes. The tyranny of the intellect is the worst of all. The rule of the intellectuals

is far severer than that of the athletes. It is better, as Ecclesiastes says, to endure the chastisement of the pop-cane than the sharpness of a clever highbrow's tongue. M. Renan said that if there were not forty thousand people going to the races every Sunday he would not have had enough leisure to study Hebrew in his attic, and, as he often pointed out, there is no tyranny so great as intellectual tyranny; nothing is more intolerant than the rule of the advanced and of the 'free-thinker', for he insists on his fads being universally obeyed. And if the unwritten laws of Eton, which are so much more powerful than the written laws, were devised and enforced by a committee of intellectuals, I venture to think that the life of the average boy would be intolerable.

These standards being what they are, memorable Etonians—one need hardly say it—have been those who have won distinction on the playing fields and on the river, those who play against Winchester, and at Lord's against Harrow, who row in the Eight at Henley, or who take part in the procession of the Boats. There are also those who acquire merit and respect by winning scholarships and other rewards of academic distinction; these, too, are respected, because it would be a great mistake to say that the Eton boy despises the prizes awarded to the achievements of the intellect. He knows they count for something, but something much less than getting your House colours or playing in Sixpenny. Nevertheless, to get the Newcastle is known to be difficult and worth while: none of the other prizes count for much, and the Hervey prize (for English verse) does not create a ripple of envy or of excitement.

But to be in Sixth Form and to recite a long speech from Thucydides in the original Greek, in black knee-

breeches, is something; and no boy disliked being sent up for good for verses. This meant that a copy of Latin verses was so good that you had to copy it out in your own handwriting on a clean sheet of paper. What happened to it afterwards I have forgotten. But if you were sent up for good three times I imagine something else happened: I think you got a prize.

I am now coming to the point.

The boys who win these distinctions in play and at work, those who play at Lord's or against Winchester, or at the Wall on St. Andrew's Day, or row at Henley, or get the Newcastle, are the vast minority; the majority of the boys win no such triumphs, sometimes they only just scrape into the first hundred and wear a scug cap all their days: and of that obscure majority I was a part—*pars minima fui*. That is why I said I was an impartial judge of what Eton life was like to the average boy. And I can now tell the world that we enjoyed our obscurity as much as those their triumphs. We admired the triumphant but we did not envy what we knew we could not emulate.

SIR MAX BEERBOHM

The Golden Drugget

From AND EVEN NOW (1918)

PRIMITIVE and essential things have great power to touch the heart of the beholder. I mean such things as a man ploughing a field, or sowing or reaping; a girl filling a pitcher from a spring; a young mother with her child; a fisherman mending his nets; a light from a lonely hut on a dark night.

Things such as these are the best themes for poets and painters, and appeal to aught that there may be of painter or poet in any one of us. Strictly, they are not so old as the hills, but they are more significant and eloquent than hills. Hills will outlast them; but hills glacially surviving the life of man on this planet are of as little account as hills tremulous and hot in ages before the life of man had its beginning. Nature is interesting only because of *us*. And the best symbols of us are such sights as I have just mentioned—sights unalterable by fashion of time or place, sights that in all countries always were and never will not be.

It is true that in many districts nowadays there are elaborate new kinds of machinery for ploughing the fields and reaping the corn. In the most progressive districts of all, I daresay, the very sowing of the grain is done by means of some engine, with better results than could be got by hand. For aught I know, there is a patented invention for catching fish by electricity. It is natural that we should, in some degree, pride ourselves on such triumphs. It is well that we should have poems

about them, and pictures of them. But such poems and pictures cannot touch our hearts very deeply. They cannot stir in us the sense of our kinship with the whole dim past and the whole dim future. The ancient Egyptians were great at scientific dodges—very great indeed, nearly as great as we, the archaeologists tell us. Sand buried the memory of those dodges for a rather long time. How are we to know that the glories of our present civilization will never be lost? The world's coal-mines and oil-fields are exhaustible; and it is not, I am told, by any means certain that scientists will discover any good substitutes for the materials which are necessary to mankind's present pitch of glory. Mankind may, I infer, have to sink back into slow and simple ways, continent be once more separated from continent, nation from nation, village from village. And, even supposing that the present rate of traction and communication and all the rest of it can forever be maintained, is our modern way of life so great a success that mankind will surely never be willing to let it lapse? Doubtless, that present rate can be not only maintained, but also accelerated immensely, in the near future. Will these greater glories be voted, even by the biggest fools, an improvement? We smile already at the people of the early nineteenth century who thought that the vistas opened by applied science were very heavenly. We have travelled far along those vistas. Light is *not* abundant in them, is it? We are proud of having gone such a long way, but . . . peradventure, those who come after us will turn back, sooner or later, of their own accord. This is a humbling thought. If the wonders of our civilization are doomed, we should prefer them to cease through lack of the minerals and mineral products that keep them going.

Possibly they are not doomed at all. But this chance counts for little as against the certainty that, whatever happens, the primitive and essential things will never, anywhere, wholly cease, while mankind lasts. And thus it is that Brown's *Ode to the Steam Plough*, Jones's *Sonnet Sequence on the Automatic Reaping Machine*, and Robinson's *Epic of the Piscicidal Dynamo*, leave unstirred the deeper depths of emotion in us. The subjects chosen by these three great poets do not much impress us when we regard them *sub specie aeternitatis*. Smith has painted nothing more masterly than his picture of a girl turning a hot-water tap. But has he *never* seen a girl fill a pitcher from a spring? Smithers's picture of a young mother seconding a resolution at a meeting of a Board of Guardians is magnificent, as brushwork. But why not have cut out the Board and put in the baby? I yield to no one in admiration of Smithkins's 'Façade of the Waldorf Hotel by Night, in Peace Time'. But a single light from a lonely hut would have been a finer theme.

I should like to show Smithkins the thing that I call The Golden Drugget. Or rather, as this thing is greatly romantic to me, and that painter is so unfortunate in his surname, I should like Smithkins to find it for himself.

These words are written in war time and in England. There are, I hear, 'lighting restrictions' even on the far Riviera di Levante. I take it that the Golden Drugget is not outspread nowanights across the high dark coast-road between Rapallo and Zoagli. But the lonely wayside inn is still there, doubtless; and its narrow door will again stand open, giving out for wayfarers its old span of brightness into darkness, when peace comes.

It is nothing by daylight, that inn. If anything, it is

rather an offence. Steep behind it rise mountains that are grey all over with olive trees, and beneath it, on the other side of the road, the cliff falls sheer to the sea. The road is white, the sea and sky are usually of a deep bright blue, there are many single cypresses among the olives. It is a scene of good colour and noble form. It is a gay and a grand scene, in which the inn, though unassuming, is unpleasing, if you pay attention to it. An ugly little box-like inn. A stuffy-looking and uninviting inn. Salt and tobacco, it announces in faint letters above the door, may be bought there. But one would prefer to buy these things elsewhere. There is a bench outside, and a rickety table with a zinc top to it, and sometimes a peasant or two drinking a glass or two of wine. The proprietress is very unkempt. To Don Quixote she would have seemed a princess, and the inn a castle, and the peasants notable magicians. Don Quixote would have paused here and done something. Not so do I.

By daylight, on the way down from my little home to Rapallo, or up from Rapallo home, I am indeed hardly conscious that this inn exists. By moonlight, too, it is negligible. Stars are rather unbecoming to it. But on a thoroughly dark night, when it is manifest as nothing but a strip of yellow light cast across the road from an ever-open door, great always is its magic for me. Is? I mean *was*. But then, I mean also *will be*. And so I cleave to the present tense—the nostalgic present, as grammarians might call it.

Likewise, when I say that thoroughly dark nights are rare here, I mean that they are rare in the Gulf of Genoa. Clouds do not seem to like our landscape. But it has often struck me that Italian nights, whenever clouds *do* congregate, are somehow as much darker than English

nights as Italian days are brighter than days in England. They have a heavier and thicker nigritude. They shut things out from you more impenetrably. They enclose you as in a small pavilion of black velvet. This tenement is not very comfortable in a strong gale. It makes you feel rather helpless. And gales can be strong enough, in the late autumn, on the Riviera di Levante.

It is on nights when the wind blows its hardest, but makes no rift anywhere for a star to peep through, that the Golden Drugget, as I approach it, gladdens my heart the most. The distance between Rapallo and my home up yonder is rather more than two miles. The road curves and zigzags sharply, for the most part; but at the end of the first mile it runs straight for three or four hundred yards; and, as the inn stands at a point midway on this straight course, the Golden Drugget is visible to me long before I come to it. Even by starlight, it is good to see. How much better, if I happen to be out on a black rough night when nothing is disclosed but this one calm bright thing. Nothing? Well, there has been descriable, all the way, a certain grey glimmer immediately in front of my feet. This, in point of fact, is the road, and by following it carefully I have managed to escape collision with trees, bushes, stone walls. The continuous shrill wailing of trees' branches writhing unseen but near, and the great hoarse roar of the sea against the rocks far down below, are no cheerful accompaniment for the buffeted pilgrim. He feels that he is engaged in single combat with Nature at her unfriendliest. He isn't sure that she hasn't supernatural allies working with her—witches on broomsticks circling closely round him, demons in pursuit of him or waiting to leap out on him. And how about mere robbers and cut-throats? Suppose

—but look! that streak, yonder, look!—the Golden Drugget.

There it is, familiar, serene, festal. That the pilgrim knew he would see it in due time does not diminish for him the queer joy of seeing it; nay, this emotion would be far less without that foreknowledge. Some things are best at first sight. Others—and here is one of them—do ever improve by recognition. I remember that when first I beheld this steady strip of light, shed forth over a threshold level with the road, it seemed to me conceivably sinister. It brought Stevenson to my mind: the chink of doubloons and the clash of cutlasses; and I think I quickened pace as I passed it. But now!—now it inspires in me a sense of deep trust and gratitude; and such awe as I have for it is altogether a loving awe, as for holy ground that should be trod lightly. A drugget of crimson cloth across a London pavement is rather resented by the casual passer-by, as saying to him, ‘Step across me, stranger, but not along me, not in!’ and for answer he spurns it with his heel. ‘Stranger, come in!’ is the clear message of the Golden Drugget. ‘This is but a humble and earthly hostel, yet you will find here a radiant company of angels and archangels.’ And always I cherish the belief that if I obeyed the summons I should receive fulfilment of the promise. Well, the beliefs that one most cherishes one is least willing to test. I do not go in at that open door. But lingering, but reluctant, is my tread as I pass by it; and I pause to bathe in the light that is as the span of our human life, granted between one great darkness and another.

HILAIRE BELLOC

The Onion-Eater

From HILLS AND THE SEA

THERE is a hill not far from my home whence it is possible to see northward and southward such a stretch of land as is not to be seen from any eminence among those I know in Western Europe. Southward the sea-plain and the sea standing up in a belt of light against the sky, and northward all the weald.

From this summit the eye is disturbed by no great cities of the modern sort, but a dozen at least of those small market towns which are the delight of South England hold the view from point to point, from the pale blue downs of the island over, eastward, to the Kentish hills.

A very long way off, and near the sea-line, the high faint spire of that cathedral which was once the mother of all my county goes up without weight into the air and gathers round it the delicate and distant outlines of the landscape—as, indeed, its builders meant that it should do. In such a spot, on such a high watch-tower of England, I met, three days ago, a man.

I had been riding my kind and honourable horse for two hours, broken, indeed, by a long rest in a deserted barn.

I had been his companion, I say, for two hours, and had told him a hundred interesting things—to which he had answered nothing at all—when I took him along a path that neither of us yet had trod. I had not, I know; he had not (I think), for he went snorting and doubt-

fully. This path broke up from the kennels near Waltham, and made for the High Wood between Gumber and No-Man's-Land. It went over dead leaves and quite lonely to the thick of the forest; there it died out into a vaguer and a vaguer trail. At last it ceased altogether, and for half an hour or so I pushed carefully, always climbing upwards, through the branches, and picked my way along the bramble-shoots, until at last I came out upon that open space of which I have spoken, and which I have known since my childhood. As I came out of the wood the south-west wind met me, full of the Atlantic, and it seemed to me to blow from Paradise.

I remembered, as I halted and so gazed north and south to the weald below me, and then again to the sea, the story of that Sultan who publicly proclaimed that he had possessed all power on earth, and had numbered on a tablet with his own hand each of his happy days, and had found them, when he came to die, to be seventeen. I knew what that heathen had meant, and I looked into my heart as I remembered the story, but I came back from the examination satisfied, for 'So far,' I said to myself, 'this day is among my number, and the light is falling. I will count it for one.' It was then that I saw before me, going easily and slowly across the downs, the figure of a man.

He was powerful, full of health and easy; his clothes were rags; his face was open and bronzed. I came at once off my horse to speak with him, and, holding my horse by the bridle, I led it forward till we met. Then I asked him whither he was going, and whether, as I knew these open hills by heart, I could not help him on his way.

He answered me that he was in no need of help, for

he was bound nowhere, but that he had come up off the high road on to the hills in order to get his pleasure and also to see what there was on the other side. He said to me also, with evident enjoyment (and in the accent of a lettered man), 'This is indeed a day to be alive!'

I saw that I had here some chance of an adventure, since it is not every day that one meets upon a lonely down a man of culture, in rags and happy. I therefore took the bridle right off my horse and let him nibble, and I sat down on the bank of the Roman road holding the leather of the bridle in my hand, and wiping the bit with plucked grass. The stranger sat down beside me, and drew from his pocket a piece of bread and a large onion. We then talked of those things which should chiefly occupy mankind: I mean, of happiness and of the destiny of the soul. Upon these matters I found him to be exact, thoughtful, and just.

First, then, I said to him: 'I also have been full of gladness all this day, and, what is more, as I came up the hill from Waltham I was inspired to verse, and wrote it inside my mind, completing a passage I had been working at for two years, upon joy. But it was easy for me to be happy, since I was on a horse and warm and well fed; yet even for me such days are capricious. I have known but few in my life. They are each of them distinct and clear, so rare are they, and (what is more) so different are they in their very quality from all other days.'

'You are right,' he said, 'in this last phrase of yours. . . . They are indeed quite other from all the common days of our lives. But you were wrong, I think, in saying that your horse and clothes and good feeding and the rest had to do with these curious intervals of content. Wealth

makes the run of our days somewhat more easy, poverty makes them more hard—or very hard. But no poverty has ever yet brought of itself despair into the soul—the men who kill themselves are neither rich nor poor. Still less has wealth ever purchased those peculiar hours. I also am filled with their spirit to-day, and God knows,’ said he, cutting his onion in two, so that it gave out a strong savour, ‘God knows I can purchase nothing.’

‘Then tell me,’ I said, ‘whence do you believe these moments come? And will you give me half your onion?’

‘With pleasure,’ he replied, ‘for no man can eat a whole onion; and as for that other matter, why, I think the door of heaven is ajar from time to time, and that light shines out upon us for a moment between its opening and closing.’ He said this in a merry, sober manner; his black eyes sparkled, and his large beard was blown about a little by the wind. Then he added: ‘If a man is a slave to the rich in the great cities (the most miserable of mankind), yet these days come to him. To the vicious wealthy and privileged men, whose faces are stamped hard with degradation, these days come; they come to you, you say, working (I suppose) in anxiety like most of men. They come to me who neither work nor am anxious so long as South England may freely import onions.’

‘I believe you are right,’ I said. ‘And I especially commend you for eating onions; they contain all health; they induce sleep; they may be called the apples of content, or, again, the companion-fruits of mankind.’

‘I have always said,’ he answered gravely, ‘that when the couple of them left Eden they hid and took away with them an onion. I am moved in my soul to have known a man who reveres and loves them in the due measure, for such men are rare.’

Then he asked, with evident anxiety: 'Is there no inn about here where a man like me will be taken in?'

'Yes,' I told him. 'Down under the Combe at Duncton is a very good inn. Have you money to pay? Will you take some of my money?'

'I will take all you can possibly afford me,' he answered in a cheerful, manly fashion. I counted out my money and found I had on me but 3s. 7d. 'Here is 3s. 7d.,' I said.

'Thank you, indeed,' he answered, taking the coins and wrapping them in a little rag (for he had no pockets, but only holes).

'I wish,' I said with regret, 'we might meet and talk more often of many things. So much do we agree, and men like you and me are often lonely.'

He shrugged his shoulders and put his head on one side, quizzing at me with his eyes. Then he shook his head decidedly, and said: 'No, no—it is certain that we shall never meet again.' And thanking me with great fervour, but briefly, he went largely and strongly down the escarpment of the Combe to Duncton and the weald; and I shall never see him again till the Great Day. . . .

EDMUND BLUNDEN

The Somme Still Flows

From THE MIND'S EYE

IT was a sunny morning, that of July 1st, 1916. The right notes for it would have been the singing of blackbirds and the ringing of the blacksmith's anvil. But, as the world soon knew, the music of that sunny morning was the guns. They had never spoken before with so huge a voice. Their sound crossed the sea. In Southdown villages the school-children sat wondering at that incessant drumming and the rattling of the windows. That night an even greater anxiety than usual forbade wives and mothers to sleep. The Battle of the Somme had begun.

This battle on the southern part of the British line overshadowed everything else. Even Ypres fell quiet. The three nations most prominently concerned on the Western Front concentrated their force in the once serene farmlands of Picardy. Their armies had arrived at a wonderful pitch of physical and spiritual strength. They were great organizations of athletes, willing to attempt any test that might be ordered. If the men of the Somme were probably unrivalled by any earlier armies, the materials and preparations of the battle were not less extraordinary. Railways, roads, motor transport, mules, water-supply, aircraft, guns, mortars, wire, grenades, timber, rations, camps, telegraphic systems—all multiplied as in some absurd vision. Many of you who are reading now still feel the fever of that gathering typhoon.

Such monstrous accumulations, and transformations of a countryside which in the sleepier period of its war had been called 'The Garden of Eden', could not be concealed from the intended victims. Surprise on the large scale was impossible. But the British devised local surprises; rapidly dug jumping-off positions; field guns waiting to fire from the front trenches; the terrific mine ready to go up at La Boisselle. The defenders also had their secrets prepared for July 1st.

At last the moment came for mutual revelations. Villages, wiped out in a few hours, earned reputations for hopeless horror when our men rose in the daylight from their already destroyed positions and moved to capture them. Some of them they did capture. Few who survived long enough under German guns and machine-guns to enter the trenches opposite could have retained any illusions. They found themselves in a great trap of tunnels and concrete and steel rails and iron entanglements. From holes in the land they had crossed, from higher ground north and south, from untouched gunpits, these isolated men were also wiped out. I knew a colonel whose hair turned white in this experience. I knew Thiepval, in which battalions disappeared that day. I knew Thiepval Wood, before which in the mud of November were withering bodies of the British and German combatants of July 1st.

The outbreak of the Somme battle may be described as a tremendous question-mark. By the end of the day both sides had seen, in a sad scrawl of broken earth and murdered men, the answer to that question. No road. No thoroughfare. Neither race had won, nor could win, the War. The War had won, and would go on winning. But, after all the preparation, the ambition, the ideals

and the rhythms of these contending armies, there could not be any stopping. To-morrow is always another day, and hope springs eternal. The battle of the Somme would continue from summer to winter. The experiment of the century must be repeated, varied, newly equipped. Perhaps luck would play a part. Perhaps external conditions would affect these machine-gun emplacements, and the lucky lads from Adelaide or Sunderland walking onward through the explosions.

Accordingly, what had been begun on July 1st became a slow slaughtering process; the Somme might have been a fatal quicksand into which division after division was drawn down. In order to illustrate that remark, I am going to sketch the history of the division in which I served during the offensive. Though we were far north of the battle-field in June, 1916, we nevertheless came under its fiery influence; for, on the last day of June, we were sent into a 'minor operation' as they called it, with the object of keeping back German troops and artillery from the real affair. Our brigade assaulted; crossed a flat water-meadow, full of deep dykes and thick barbed wire, under every kind of fire; and a great many of us were dead or wounded within a couple of hours. 'Like a butcher's shop,' said a plain-spoken private to the general next day. When we had to some extent recovered from this minor operation, the powerful and ominous words came round, 'We're going South.'

War is not all war, and there lies the heart of the monster. 'Going South' was at first more like a holiday adventure than the descent to the valley of the shadow. I still make myself pictures of that march, and could not guess at any summer days more enchanting. The very

fact that, after ceaseless rumours and contradictions, we were now certainly destined for the Somme battle made us shut our minds to the future and embrace the present. We marched with liberal halts through wooded uplands, under arcades of elms, past mill-streams and red and white farms; and, as we marched, we sang. Not even the indifferent map-reading of the boyish officer at the head of the battalion could damp our spirits. What were kilometres? At twilight we took over our billets in clay-walled barns, or farm-houses with vineleaves at the windows and 'café, monsieur' at any moment. Every man knew his neighbour. Never was such candour or such confidence.

We stayed longer at the hamlet which provided our training-ground. Indeed, its chalky hill-sides were said to be precisely similar to our future share of the Somme battlefield. In an interval of our successful attacks on the dummy trenches of our ghostly enemy, we lay down by companies while some particularly well-nourished experts from General Head-quarters eulogized the beauty of the bayonet. We went to sleep. Presently rainy weather set in, but when we continued our journey to the battle the sun burned and the dust rose along the road. It was towards the end of August.

After several postponements we made our first appearance in the fighting. We did not know, most of us, that the lines which we had dreams of capturing had been attacked on July 1st. But, as I stared across a valley at the German positions, a day or two before our action, I was puzzled by a small heap of what was clearly British barbed wire, on its original reels, a long way behind the enemy's front trench. In the cold early mist of September 3rd our division went over. A few astonishing officers

and men fought their way to those coils of wire. One or two returned from them in the evening, by which time history had repeated itself. The shattered battalions withdrew from the valleys and ridges still echoing with bombardment and the pounding of machine-guns. The Somme had pulled us under once, and we emerged just gasping. Somewhere to the south there had been a success.

We did not withdraw far. We quickly returned to the line and remained in the trenches, from which two mighty attacks had been launched, week upon week. South, there was still a vague hope. Trenches were said to be changing hands beyond Thiepval Hill, which still frowned upon our ragged remains of trenches. We witnessed and heard furious attacks in that direction, rolling smoke, bursts of flame, soaring signal-lights; but these closed in autumn darkness. One day a sensation was caused. Down there in the south the British had made an attack with Tanks, which we understood to be as big as houses and capable of pushing houses down. Then the Somme was still a promising experiment!

For our own next attack we had no assistance of tanks. It was now a long age since July 1st and its blue skies. Yet October 21st was a still, frosty day. A surprise was reserved for our opponents: we were to attack a few minutes after noon. We did. Some of us had now seen three attacks, others had just arrived from the barrack-squares, where sacks of straw are nimbly transfixed by unshelled and unbombed soldiers. We took our trench, and were then submitted to artillery concentration, which went on two days. There were enough of us left to hand over the conquered ground to the 'next for the barber', and to crawl back through endless shell-holes

and dead. The captured trench was partly floored with bodies.

Almost at once we were in the line again, and after some days of curious peace we moved to a desperate mud-field east of Thiepval—one of the classic terrors of the Western Front. The year was breaking up now. The craters were swimming with foul water. What was left of the trenches became lanes of yellow and blood-brown slime, deeper than our average height. The tracks beside them were usually smoking with accurate gunfire. The alternative was, generally, to be blown to pieces or to be drowned. After several days of the Schwaben Redoubt, with the corpses choking the dug-out entrances, we were informed of another surprise arranged for the enemy. Our division was to take part in a large attack. This occurred on November 13th. The division surpassed itself, capturing ground and one labyrinth of dug-outs with many hundreds of Germans in them. Still, there was no sign yet of the fabled green country beyond the Somme battle. That evening I was sent forward with a runner on a reconnaissance. It was growing dark, a drizzling rain was steadily increasing, and on every side was the glare and wailing and crashing of bombardment. We passed through the new posts of the British advance, shivering in water-holes, and then we went blindly astray. After our painful wandering through the barrages of two artilleries and the crazy ruins of trench and battery systems, we were lucky enough to find a way back. That night, retracing our adventure with the colonel and his maps, we found that we had been in the outskirts of a village named Grandcourt. Grandcourt! We felt a little proud. But it came out that some British soldiers had made their miraculous

way to that village through the German forts and fire on that remote summer's morning, July 1st.

After this winter battle we left the Somme—but who were 'we'? Not those who had marched south in the time of ripening orchards; a very different body of men. We had been passed through the furnace and the quicksand. What had happened to this division was typical of the experience of all divisions in all the armies. There is no escape from the answer given on July 1st to the question of the human race. War had been 'found out', overwhelmingly found out. War is an ancient impostor, but none of his masks and smiles and gallant trumpets can any longer delude us; he leads the way through the cornfields to the cemetery of all that is best. The best is, indeed, his special prey. What men did in the battle of the Somme, day after day, and month after month, will never be excelled in honour, unselfishness, and love; except by those who come after and resolve that their experience shall never again fall to the lot of human beings.

NEVILLE CARDUS

A Sentimental Journey

From GOOD DAYS

A TAXI was taking Jolyon to Lord's, running quickly along and passing Regent's Park on the right. The old man felt a flutter of strange excitement; not for years had he been to Lord's—he couldn't remember the last time. He was always intending to watch a cricket match again, but somehow other things turned up, and he loved his garden in the summer. He remembered, as if it were only yesterday, the match in which Grace reached his 1000 runs in May. Grace had wanted about 50, and for a quarter of an hour his score stayed at 49. A long time ago; the 'nineties seemed to Jolyon often to be farther away than the days when he was at Oxford. He played in the Parks in a Freshmen's match and remembered it well. But he often mixed up the names and events of the 'nineties.

There was something strange about this journey to Lord's; what was it? Ah, of course, he was being taken in a taxi. Never before had he gone to Lord's in a taxi; it had always been a hansom. But there was much to be said for taxis; they went quicker, saved time, and, besides, that hole in the top of a hansom was a fool of a thing, and you felt ridiculous when the cabby looked at you through it.

The taxi turned into St. John's Wood Road. Jolyon recognized every part of the pavement of it; time after time he had come here on forgotten June mornings. It was quieter then, not so much traffic. He once saw

Richardson and Lockwood walking along the pavement. They were very big men, and they wore blue serge, with watch-chains over their waistcoats. Both were dead now, Jolyon supposed, but you could not easily believe it; they had seemed the sort of simple, rough men that go on for ever. 'Institutions,' said Jolyon as he thought about them.

He saw at once, as soon as he got into the ground, that the place had changed a bit. He was not sure about the Nursery end. Where were the arches? That stand was in the way; that was new for certain. Well, it was a change for the better; it looked handsome, and there was no doubt that many more people watched cricket nowadays. He bought a match-card off a boy on his favourite Mound stand; he never did sit in the pavilion, not enough sunshine there after midday. He looked at the card: 'Gloucestershire *v.* Middlesex; a three-day match.' He liked the formality of Lord's. A splendid place; he really must come oftener. The pavilion possessed dignity; the whole place stood for something. Jolyon remembered a phrase he had read the other day about Lord's—'Eternal England'; rhetorical, of course, but true in a way.

He was glad it was Gloucestershire who were playing; he wanted to see Hammond. He read the names on the card. Where did C. L. Townsend bat nowadays? But what was he talking about; C. L. Townsend didn't play any longer. No, it was not a piece of bad memory; he prided himself on his memory. C. L. Townsend had given up county cricket early on in life; he could not be much more than—well, fifty or so. Jolyon saw Townsend at Lord's bowling left-handed slows, fresh from school, a tall, thin boy. Then there was Jessop. Jolyon chuckled.

How the field used to spread; four or five men in the deep and the stumper all alone! But Thornton had been a bigger hitter even than Jessop; and then there was that Australian fellow, Blackham; no Bonnor—that was his name; he had a black beard.

The players came into the field, and Jolyon joined in the hand-clapping. He found it hard to sort out the cricketers, though he admitted the score-board was efficiently worked. 'Bowler 10,' Goddard; a new man, evidently. And Middlesex, not Gloucestershire, were batting. He turned to a parson sitting next to him. 'Which is Hammond?' he asked. The parson pointed out Hammond fielding in the slips. 'Ah yes, of course,' said Jolyon. 'He's thickened out since last summer.' He was pleased with that reply; he was not going to give himself away.

'They are making the new ball swerve a lot this morning,' he said to the parson after a while. That was another score for him. He had read in the newspaper all about the new ball—no fresh idea, of course, because he recollected old Wright of Kent and Rawlin of Middlesex. The parson became a little restive. 'Very slow batting,' he said. 'They don't play forward enough; I'd like to see Stoddart tackling this stuff.' 'They've got to play themselves in,' said Jolyon, and he applauded a stroke through the slips which went for a single. 'Stoddart would have cut that ball for four,' said the parson, 'but you never see any cutting nowadays.' Jolyon fixed his attention on the game. He admired the quick movements of Hammond in the slips. When Hendren and Hearne came in he told the parson who they were.

At lunch he went in the room where a long time ago he used to take his young nephew. He ordered cold salmon

and tasted it again after many years. It brought back a Gentlemen *v.* Players match; he could feel the day and the occasion. Curious how a man sometimes feels he is doing something he has done before, feels he is living through a scene and an act which, as though in another existence, he has already lived through. That day he had given young Stephen a birthday, and after Lord's had taken him to the club and then to a theatre to see W. S. Penley. They left Lord's an hour before close of play, and in Pall Mall they bought an evening newspaper and saw that Arthur Shrewsbury had reached his century. He could have sworn, as he ate the salmon, that it had all happened only last year; the sense of everything remained fresh and near.

He returned to his seat. Hearne was not out, and Robins was in with him. He liked the young man, so eager and full of life. He applauded vigorously, and several times cried out, 'Well hit, sir!' He told the parson what he thought of Robins. The parson answered, 'I wish this man Hearne would bestir himself.' Jolyon told him that the bowling was very good. He was sad when Robins fell to a catch at cover.

Another professional joined Hearne. The sun shone down on his old head and the chimes of the clock in the ivy-covered tower made a sweet sound. He nodded, and saw the haze of heat on the meadows beyond his garden near the Thames; he saw dappled shadows on the grass at his feet made by the sun falling through the orchard trees. He told himself he would have to see Wilson about some wasp-bands. . . . He woke up with a start. Confound it, he had fallen asleep at Lord's. He was annoyed with himself. Perhaps, after all, this man Hearne was rather dreary; but he had enjoyed Robins.

He liked the noise of the hand-claps as it rippled round the field from time to time. Yes, he would come to Lord's oftener. Another wicket fell, and he looked for his match-card. It had dropped to the ground. He picked it up, and after examining the score-board he wrote with his pencil 'c. Sinfield, b. Parker.' 'Parker must be getting on in years,' he said to the parson next him. Hearne was in the nineties, and Jolyon became nervous. 'Leave them alone,' he murmured as one or two offside balls went by Hearne's bat. The parson told him there was no danger. At last Hearne hit a four and reached his century. 'Well played, sir,' said Jolyon, 'a fine innings, I think.' 'Too slow,' said the parson. 'He's played the right game for his side,' retorted Jolyon, and then felt ashamed of his heat. Still, he was right, surely, to stand up for Hearne. He looked at his watch. Ten minutes to six—he must be going. The parson was calculating the time Hearne had been batting; four hours for 102. 'They don't hit the ball,' he maintained. Jolyon chuckled to himself; a lovely thrust had occurred to him. He got up ready to depart. 'Too many people nowadays living in the past,' he said.

Outside the ground he was still chuckling; that was a Parthian thrust, he told himself. He got into a taxi, and soon he was passing Regent's Park again. An idea struck him; he would round off the day at Lord's in the way he used to; dinner at the club and then a theatre. Once he saw Irving in *The Bells* a few hours after he had seen W. G. Grace make a big score. Well, there was Gerald du Maurier at the Prince's, as good an actor as any of them.

28/3/73
Manzoor Durrani

G. K. CHESTERTON

*On the Pleasures of No Longer Being
Very Young*

From ALL IS GRIST

THERE are advantages in the advance through middle age into later life which are very seldom stated in a sensible way. Generally, they are stated in a sentimental way; in a general suggestion that all old men are equipped with beautiful snowy beards like Father Christmas and rejoice in unfathomable wisdom like Nestor. All this has caused the young people to be sceptical about the real advantages of the old people, and the true statement of those advantages sounds like a paradox. I would not say that old men grow wise, for men never grow wise; and many old men retain a very attractive childishness and cheerful innocence. Elderly people are often much more romantic than younger people, and sometimes even more adventurous, having begun to realize how many things they do not know. It is a true proverb, no doubt, which says, 'There is no fool like an old fool.' Perhaps there is no fool who is half so happy in his own fool's paradise. But, however this may be, it is true that the advantages of maturity are not those which are generally urged even in praise of it, and when they are truly urged they sound like an almost comic contradiction.

For instance, one pleasure attached to growing older is that many things seem to be growing younger; growing fresher and more lively than we once supposed them to

be. We begin to see significance, or (in other words) to see life, in a large number of traditions, institutions, maxims, and codes of manners that seem in our first days to be dead. A young man grows up in a world that often seems to him intolerably old. He grows up among proverbs and precepts that appear to be quite stiff and senseless. He seems to be stuffed with stale things; to be given the stones of death instead of the bread of life; to be fed on the dust of the dead past; to live in a town of tombs. It is a very natural mistake, but it is a mistake. The advantage of advancing years lies in discovering that traditions are true, and therefore alive; indeed, a tradition is not even traditional except when it is alive. It is great fun to find out that the world has not repeated proverbs because they are proverbial, but because they are practical. Until I owned a dog, I never knew what is meant by the proverb about letting a sleeping dog lie, or the fable about the dog in the manger. Now those dead phrases are quite alive to me, for they are parts of a perfectly practical psychology. Until I went to live in the country, I had no notion of the meaning of the maxim, 'It's an ill wind that blows nobody good.' Now it seems to me as pertinent and even pungent as if it were a new remark just made to me by a neighbour at the garden gate. It is something to come to live in a world of living and significant things instead of dead and unmeaning things. And it is youth in revolt, even in righteous revolt, which sees its surroundings as dead and unmeaning. It is old age, and even second childhood, that has come to see that everything means something and that life itself has never died.

For instance, we have just seen a staggering turn of the wheel of fortune which has brought all the modern

material pride and prosperity to a standstill. America, which a year or two ago seemed to have become one vast Eldorado studded with cities of gold, is almost as much embarrassed as England, and really much more embarrassed than Ireland. The industrial countries are actually finding it difficult to be industrial, while the old agricultural countries still find it possible to be industrious. Now, I do not pretend to have prophesied or expected this, for a man may cheerfully call a thing rotten without really expecting it to rot. But neither, certainly, did the young, the progressive, the prosperous, or the adventurous expect it. Yet all history and culture is stiff with proverbs and prophecies telling them to expect it. The trouble is that they thought the proverbs and history a great deal too stiff. Again and again, with monotonous reiteration, both my young friends and myself had been told from childhood that fortune is fickle, that riches take to themselves wings and fly, that power can depart suddenly from the powerful, that pride goes before a fall, and insolence attracts the thunderbolt of the gods. But it was all unmeaning to us, and all the proverbs seemed stiff and stale, like dusty labels on neglected antiquities. We had heard of the fall of Wolsey, which was like the crash of a huge palace, still faintly rumbling through the ages; we had read of it in the words of Shakespeare, which possibly were not written by Shakespeare; we had learned them and learned nothing from them. We had read ten thousand times, to the point of tedium, of the difference between the Napoleon of Marengo and the Napoleon of Moscow; but we should never have expected Moscow if we had been looking at Marengo. We knew that Charles the Fifth resigned his crown, or that Charles the First lost his

head; and we should have duly remarked '*Sic transit gloria mundi*', after the incident, but not before it. We had been told that the Roman Empire declined, or that the Spanish Empire disintegrated; but no German ever really applied it to the German Empire, and no Briton to the British Empire. The very repetition of these truths will sound like the old interminable repetition of the truisms. And yet they are to me, at this moment, like amazing and startling discoveries, for I have lived to see the dead proverbs come alive.

This, like so many of the realizations of later life, is quite impossible to convey in words to anybody who has not reached it in this way. It is like a difference of dimension or plane, in which something which the young have long looked at, rather wearily, as a diagram has suddenly become a solid. It is like the indescribable transition from the inorganic to the organic; as if the stone snakes and birds of some ancient Egyptian inscription began to leap about like living things. The thing was a dead maxim when we were alive with youth. It becomes a living maxim when we are nearer to death. Even as we are dying, the whole world is coming to life.

Another paradox is this: that it is not the young people who realize the new world. The moderns do not realize modernity. They have never known anything else. They have stepped on to a moving platform which they hardly know to be moving, as a man cannot feel the daily movement of the earth. But he would feel it sharp enough if the earth suddenly moved the other way. The older generation consists of those who do remember a time when the world moved the other way. They do feel sharply and clearly the epoch which is beginning, for they were there before it began. It is one of the artistic

advantages of the aged that they do see the new things relieved sharply against a background, their shape definite and distinct. To the young these new things are often themselves the background, and are hardly seen at all. Hence, even the most intelligent of innovators is often strangely mistaken about the nature of innovation and the things that are really new. And the Oldest Inhabitant will often indulge in a senile chuckle, as he listens to the Village Orator proclaiming that the village church will soon be swept away and replaced by a factory for chemicals. For the Oldest Inhabitant knows very well that nobody went to church in the days of his childhood except out of snobbishness, and that it is in his old age that the church has begun once more to be thronged with believers. In my capacity of Oldest Inhabitant (with senile chuckle), I will give one instance of a kindred kind. A man must be at least as old as I am in order to remember how utterly idiotic, inconceivable, and crazily incredible it once seemed that any educated or even reasonably shrewd person should confess that he believed in *ghosts*. You must be nearly the Oldest Inhabitant to know with what solid scorn and certainty the squire and the parson denied the possibility of the village ghost; the parson even more emphatically than the squire. The village ghost was instantly traced to the village drunkard or the village liar. Educated people *knew* that the dead do not return in the world of sense. Those who remember those times, and have lived to see a man of science like Sir Oliver Lodge founding quite a fashionable religion, are amused to hear a young man say the world is moving away from the supernatural. They know in what direction it has really moved.

BERNARD DARWIN

A 'Tail' with a Moral

From SECOND SHOTS

IT happened to me on a wintry afternoon, when it was just beginning to grow dusk, to walk across the park from Marble Arch in the direction of Kensington. As I walked I saw a sight so engaging that, despite the chill wind, I lingered watching. There was an old gentleman, not so old either, but hale and upright, dressed as a prosperous British merchant should be, in a tall hat and all things meet, and with him there sported on the grass a Dandie Dinmont, not so young either perhaps, but with a high spirit and a wagging tail.

The old gentleman carried in his hand a fine solid walking-stick with an ivory handle, and the Dandie carried in his mouth a grimy tennis-ball. This he deposited at his master's feet, and then withdrawing to a little distance waited joyously. The old gentleman teed the tennis-ball on a tuft of grass, verified his grip, executed a short waggle, and then hit the ball a resounding smack. The Dandie raced after it—it once went so far that he lost it for a while—and then bringing it back sat over it in the attitude of a lion couchant. After a proper interval he surrendered it, the old gentleman had another elaborate swing and another cheerful smack, and Pepper (so I named him after his ancestor at Charlies-hope) again ecstatically retrieved it. It made the pleasantest picture, and it was hard to say which of the two most enjoyed the game.

As I walked reluctantly away I made up a little story

about the two players. The old gentleman used to play golf very seriously indeed, toiled at his swing and read all the latest books. But somehow he did not get on very well; he returned home at the end of the day tired and dispirited and wondered dismally over his glass of port after dinner what he had been doing wrong and why he had not begun golf when he was younger. And it was then that Pepper, who had been sternly turned back in the morning, when greeting his master's great-coat with expectant barks, would look at him with sad, reproachful eyes. One day he was taking Pepper and the tennis-ball out for an airing in the park, when it suddenly occurred to him that here was an opportunity for a little practice. He looked round him with a stealthy and shame-faced air; there was no park-keeper in sight, no one could see him. So, instead of throwing Pepper's ball he drove it manfully with his walking-stick. And what an entrancing sensation it was! True, the ball did not fly high into the air, but then neither, as a rule, did a golf-ball when he hit it, and, if it did, it flew in a malignant curve to the right. This ball was nice and big, it made a jolly noise, and he could hit it a plump and honest blow. Here were no slices, no bunkers, no grinning caddies, and Pepper seemed to enjoy the game more than ever.

That evening after dinner, when he sat in his arm-chair with his handkerchief over his face and Pepper lay curled like a whiting in his basket, both had the most delicious dreams of phantom balls, and there was no bitter disillusion on waking. So he gradually gave up the long, tiresome journey to his golf-club and only played in the park. As he has now practically retired from business, Pepper has as many games as he wants.

In fact, when in a year or two Pepper gets a little older and stiffer he will go on playing chiefly to amuse his master. But I am sure he will never let the old gentleman find that out.

There must be several morals to be drawn from this story, and different people would draw different ones. It might, for instance, be used for purposes of propaganda by those who, still hankering after the poor dead gutty, want us all to play with a lighter and larger ball. They tell us that, if we only knew, we should get far more pleasure out of a bigger ball which would respond, especially out of bad lies, to our paltry blows. Well, I make them a present of my story, which, adorned by a pretty woodcut of the old gentleman and his dog, would make, I submit, an effective pamphlet. Then there is the obvious moral that if we play golf badly we had better give it up; but that I will not allow: it touches some of us too nearly. Or again, it may be said that we should not be selfish in our pleasures, and should take our dogs with us to the links. This, too, is, I fear, inadmissible. I sometimes play with the master of those whom I will call the three little grey ladies of Hook Heath. They are quite charming, but when one of them stands at point, another at silly mid-on, and a third hunts for rabbits behind the bowler's arm, concentration on the stroke in hand does become difficult. On a golf-course other people's dogs are like other people's children: their gambollings lack that disarming quality which distinguishes those of our own.

So our moral must be of a more general character, to be indicated only in general terms. That we should be content with our own modest game such as it is, that we should try to think of golf as good fun and make it

good fun for our fellow-player—here are some very simple suggestions from Pepper:

He who his little life surveys
With spirits buoyant and unflagging,
And needs such trifling joys to raise
His tail to a contented wagging.

WALTER DE LA MARE

The Vats

From THE RIDDLE

MANY years ago now—in that once upon a time which is the memory of the imagination rather than of the workaday mind, I went walking with a friend. Of what passed before we set out I have nothing but the vaguest recollection. All I remember is that it was early morning, that we were happy to be in one another's company, that there were bright green boughs overhead amongst which the birds floated and sang, and that the early dews still burned in their crystal in the sun.

We were taking our way almost at haphazard across country, there was now grass, now the faintly sparkling flinty dust of an English road, underfoot. With remarkably few humans to be seen, we trudged on, turning our eyes ever and again to glance laughingly, questioningly, or perplexedly at one another's, then slanting them once more on the blue-canopied countryside. It was Spring, in the month of May, I think, and we were talking of Time.

We speculated on what it was, and where it went to, touched in furtive tones on the Fourth Dimension and exchanged 'the Magic Formula'. We wondered if pigs could see time as they see the wind, and wished we could recline awhile upon those bewitching banks where it grows wild. We confessed to each other how of late we had been pining in our secret hearts for just a brief spell of an *eternity* of it. Time wherein we could be and think and dream all that each busy, hugger-mugger, feverish,

precipitate twenty-four hours would not allow us to be or to think or dream. Impracticable, infatuate desire! We desired to muse, to brood, to meditate, to embark (with a buoyant cargo) upon that quiet stream men call reverie. We had all but forgotten how even to sleep. We lay like Argus of nights with all our hundred eyes ajar.

There were books we should never now be able to read; speculations we should never be able to explore; riddles we should never so much as hear put, much less expounded. There were, above all, waking visions now past hoping for; long since shut away from us by the stream of the hasty moments—as they tick and silt and slide irrecoverably away. In the gay folly of that bright morning we could almost have vowed there were even other ‘selves’ awaiting us with whom no kind of precarious tryst we had ever made we had ever been faithful to. Perhaps they and we would be ready if only the world’s mechanical clocks would cease their trivial moralizings.

And memories—surely they would come arrowing home in the first of the evening to haunts serene and unmolested, if only the weather and mood and season and housing we could offer were decently propitious. We had frittered away, squandered so many days, weeks, years—and had saved so little. Spend-thrifts of the un-borrowable, we had been living on our capital—a capital bringing in how meagre an ‘interest’—and were continually growing poorer. Once, when we were children, and in our own world, an hour had been as capacious as the blue bowl of the sky, and of as refreshing a milk. Now its successors haggardly snatched their way past our sluggish senses like thieves pursued.

Like an hour glass that cannot tell the difference

between its head and its heels; like a dial on a sunless day; like a timepiece wound-up—wound-up and bereft of its pendulum; so were we. Age, we had hideously learned, devours life as a river consumes flakes of the falling snow. Soon we should be beggars, with scarcely a month to our name; and none to give us alms.

I confess that at this crisis in our talk I caught an uncomfortable glimpse of the visionary stallions of my hearse—ink-black streaming manes and tails—positively galloping me off—wreaths, glass, corpse and all, to keep their dismal appointment with the grave: and even at that, abominably late.

Indeed, our minds had at length become so profoundly engaged in these pictures and forebodings as we paced on, that a complete aeon might have meanwhile swept over our heads. We had talked ourselves into a kind of oblivion. Nor had either of us given the least thought to our direction or destination. We had been following not even so much as our noses. And then suddenly we 'came to'. Maybe it was the unwonted silence—a silence unbroken even by the harplike drone of noonday—that recalled us to ourselves. Maybe the air in these unfamiliar parts was of a crisper quality, or the mere effect of the strangeness around us had muttered in secret to our inward spirits. Whether or not, we both of us discovered at the same instant and as if at a signal, that without being aware of it, and while still our tongues were wagging on together on our old-fashioned theme, we had come into sight of the Vats. We looked up, and lo!—they lay there in the middle distance, in cluster enormous under the cloudless sky: and here were we!

Imagine two age-scarred wolf-skinned humans of prehistoric days paddling along at shut of evening on some

barbarous errand, and suddenly from a sweeping crest on Salisbury Plain descrying on the nearer horizon the awful monoliths of Stonehenge. An experience resembling that was ours this summer day.

We came at once to a standstill amid the far-flung stretches of the unknown plateau on which we had re-found ourselves, and with eyes fixed upon these astonishing objects, stood and stared. I have called them Vats. Vats they were not; but rather sunken reservoirs; vast semi-spherical primeval Cisterns, of an area many times that of the bloated and swollen gasometers which float like huge flattened bubbles between earth and heaven under the sunlit clouds of the Thames. But no sunbeams dispread themselves here. They lay slumbering in a grave, crystal light, which lapped, deep as the Tuscarora Trough, above and around their prodigious stone plates, or slats, or slabs, or laminae; their steep slopes washed by the rarefied atmosphere of their site, and in hue of a hoary green.

As we gazed at them like this from afar they seemed to be in number, as I remember, about nine, but they were by no means all of a size. For one or two of the rotundas were smaller in compass than the others, just as there may be big snails or mushrooms in a family, and little ones.

But any object on earth of a majesty or magnitude that recalls the pyramids is a formidable spectacle. And not a word passed between us, scarcely a glance, as with extreme caution and circumspection we approached—creeping human pace by pace—to view them nearer.

A fit of shivering came over me, I recollect, as thus advantaged I scanned their enormous sides, shaggy with tufts of a monstrous moss and scarred with yard-wide

circumambulations of lichen. Gigantic grasses stooped their fattened seedpods from the least rough ledge. They might be walls of ice, so cold their aspect; or of a matter discoverable only in an alien planet.

Not—though they were horrific to the *eye*—not that they were in themselves appalling to the soul. Far rather they seemed to be emblems of an ineffable peace; harmless as, centuries before Noah, were the playing leviathans in a then privy Pacific. And when one looked close on them it was to see myriads of animated infinitesimals in crevice and cranny, of a beauty, hue, and symmetry past eye to seize. Indeed, there was a hint remotely human in the looks of these Vats. The likeness between them resembled that between generations of mankind, countless generations old. Contemplating them with the unparalleled equanimity their presence at last bestowed, one might almost have ventured to guess their names. And never have I seen sward or turf so smooth and virginally emerald as that which heaved itself against their brobdingnagian flanks.

My friend and I, naturally enough, were acutely conscious of our minuteness of stature as we stood side by side in this unrecorded solitude, and, out of our little round heads, peered up at them with our eyes. Obviously their muscous incrustations and the families of weeds flourishing in their interstices were of an age to daunt the imagination. Their ancestry must have rooted itself here when the dinosaur and the tribes of the megatherium roamed earth's crust and the pterodactyl clashed through its twilight—thousands of centuries before the green acorn sprouted that was to afford little Cain in a fallen world his first leafy petticoats. I realized as if at a sigh why smiles the Sphinx; why the primary

stars have blazed on in undiminishing midnight lustre during Man's brief history, and his childish constellations have scarcely by a single inch of heaven changed in their apparent stations.

They wore that air of lovely timelessness which decks the thorn, and haunts for the half-woken sense the odour of sweet-brier; yet they were grey with the everlasting, as are the beards of the patriarchs and the cindery craters of the Moon. Theirs was the semblance of having been lost, forgotten, abandoned, like some foundered Nereid-haunted derelict of the first sailors, rotting in dream upon an undiscovered shore. They hunched their vast shapes out of the green beneath the sunless blue of space, and for untrodden leagues around them stretched like a paradisal savanna what we poor thronging clock-vexed men call Silence. Solitude.

In telling of these Vats it is difficult to convey in mere words even a fraction of their effect upon our minds. And not merely our minds. They called to some hidden being within us that, if not their coeval, was at least aware of their exquisite antiquity. Whether of arch-angelic or daemonic construction, clearly they had remained unvisited by mortal man for as many centuries at least as there are cherries in Damascus or beads in Tierra del Fuego. Sharers of this thought, we two dwarf visitors had whispered an instant or so together, face to face; and then were again mute.

Yes, we were of one mind about that. In the utmost depths of our imaginations it was clear to us that these supremely solitary objects, if not positively cast out of thought, had been abandoned.

But by whom? My friend and I had sometimes talked of the divine Abandoner; and also (if one can, and may,

distinguish between mood and person, between the dream and the dreamer) of It. Here was the vacancy of His presence; just as one may be aware of a filament of His miracle in the smiling beauty that hovers above the swaying grasses of an indecipherable grave-stone.

Looking back on the heartless and rayless noonday of those Vats, I see, as I have said, the mere bodies of my friend and me, the upright bones of us, indescribably dwarfed by their antediluvian monstrosity. Yet within the lightless bellies of these sarcophagi were heaped up, we were utterly assured (though *how*, I know not) floods, beyond measure, of the waters for which our souls had pined. Waters, imaginably so clear as to be dense, as if of melted metal more translucent even than crystal; of such a tenuous purity that not even the moonlit branches of a dream would spell their reflex in them; so costly, so far beyond price, that this whole stony world's rubies and sapphires and amethysts of Mandalay and Guadalajara and Solikamsk, all the treasure-houses of Gambalech and the booty of King Tamburlane would suffice to purchase not one drop.

It is indeed the unseen, the imagined, the untold-of, the fabulous, the forgotten that alone lies safe from mortal moth and rust; and these Vats—their very silence held us spellbound, as were the Isles before the Sirens sang.

But how, it may be asked; No sound? No spectral tread? No faintest summons? And not the minutest iota of a superscription? None. I sunk my very being into nothingness, so that I seemed to become but a shell receptive of the least of whispers. But the multitudinous life that was here was utterly silent. No sigh, no ripple, no pining chime of rilling drop within. Waters of life; but infinitely still.

I may seem to have used extravagant terms. My friend and I used none. We merely stood in dumb survey of these crusted, butt-like domes of stone, wherein slept *Elixir Vitae*, whose last echo had been the Choragium of the morning stars.

God knows there are potent explosives in these latter days. My friend and I had merely the nails upon our fingers, a pen-knife and a broken pair of scissors in our pockets. We might have scraped seven and seventy score growths of a Nebuchadnezzar's talons down to the quick, and yet have left all but unmarked and unscarred those mossed and monstrous laminae. But we had tasted the untastable, and were refreshed in spirit at least a little more endurably than are the camel-riders of the Sahara dream-ridden by mirage.

We knew now and for ever that Time-pure *is*; that here—somewhere awaiting us and all forlorn mankind—lay hid the solace of our mortal longing; that doubtless the Seraph whose charge is the living waters will in the divine hour fetch down his iron key in his arms, and—well, Dives, rich man and crumb-waster that he was, pleaded out of the flames for but one drop of them. Neither my friend nor I was a Dives then, nor was ever likely to be. And now only I remain.

We were Children of Lazarus, ageing, footsore, dusty, and athirst. We smiled openly and with an extraordinary gentle felicity at one another—his eyes and mine—as we turned away from the Vats.

ST. J. G. ERVINE

The Author to His Readers

From SOME IMPRESSIONS OF MY ELDERS

* * * * *

I HAVE reached that period of my life when my wish is rather *not* to write a book than to write one, and I have lost all the cheery conceit which caused me in my youth to feel that anything I wrote ought to be published in a handsome volume. Indeed, when I think of the great quantity of books there already are in this world, it seems to me a sign of hopeless irresponsibility to add to their number. There are so many books which ought to be read, but never can because there is not enough time, that no author can plead justification for printing a book which does not come within the catalogue of those that ought to be read unless he needs the money which, presumably, he will get for it. I cannot urge even that plea, for I have few needs, and they are easily satisfied. I have never been afflicted with the mania for owning things, as Walt Whitman calls it, and therefore have no wish to accumulate either goods or money. Were it not for the insistence of some of my friends, I do not suppose I should issue this book to the public at all. We are too prone, we scribblers, to put our casual writings between the covers of a book, when regard for our craft would compel us to reserve that dignity for our greatest efforts; and I have feared for several years now to be one of these offenders. And yet, one likes to have an array of books on a shelf and be able to say, 'I wrote those.' The profession of writing gives degree and

reputation to a man which is often greater than his due, and people of ability will listen respectfully to the opinions of a lesser person than themselves merely because he (or even she) has printed a book. Many clever men and women actually paid good American money to hear me talk on odds and ends of subjects, although they probably had views on them that were at least as sound as mine and no doubt a great deal sounder. I am afraid of this tribute to the author. It may make us, a much assorted crowd, esteem ourselves more highly than we are naturally prone to do. The mere fact that a man has contracted a profitable habit of putting words together does not entitle him to more of the world's respect than is due to one who has contracted the habit of putting bits of metal together and calling the result a motor-car. I do not know why a man who writes books should regard himself as a better man than one who makes butter. Far less do I know why the man who makes butter should consent to believe that he is less worthy than the man who makes books. But undoubtedly some such superstition fills the minds of most of us. When a man or woman of ordinary appearance and uninteresting speech comes into our presence, we say 'How do you do!' and turn away; but when we are informed that this same person has written a novel, immediately we become interested and turn again to him or her in the expectation that something profoundly illuminating will be said to us. Experience does not cure us of that delusive hope. We do not prick up our ears when a man who owns the largest motor-car factory in the world comes into our presence, and we yawn in the face of a railway director. Yet either of these may be far more entertaining company than any author. It is true

that the author is presumably more imaginative than the owner of the factory or the director of the railway, and perhaps the instinctive tribute paid by mankind to the author, even when mankind omits to buy his books, is a recognition of the value of imagination in human life. As such I gladly accept it. Nevertheless, I could wish for more discrimination in these tributes. On the whole, I would prefer to see our authors neglected than over-estimated. No one on earth and probably no one in heaven can prevent an author from making books while he has breath in his body and energy in his brain and fingers. Therefore, neglect will not greatly harm him. But too much praise, too much consideration of his views, above all, too much profit from his work, will make a sad mess of an excellent writer. I tell myself sometimes that an author should not be praised until he is dead, though he might occasionally be dispraised during his lifetime. We should thus save him, though there is no certainty in this, from excess of vanity. Let Shakespeare's reputation grow to legendary proportions when he is safely within his grave, but do not, if you desire the best that is in him, let him be often or much praised while he is alive. We have come to a period of time when authors feel that they must write so many books each year. But I would have an author publish a book only when the compulsion to publish it becomes greater than he can resist. Books would not necessarily then be better, but they would certainly be fewer, and they might be better.

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SIR JAMES GEORGE FRAZER

A Dream of Cambridge

From THE GORGON'S HEAD

LAST night I slept and dreamed a dream. I thought I was once more in Cambridge, and in my old rooms looking out on the Great Court of Trinity. It was evening and the window was open. Across the court I saw again, as I had seen so often, the lighted windows of the hall, and above the roof of the Master's lodge the evening star like a silver lamp hung low in the western sky. In the chapel close at hand the organ was playing and the choir was singing. When their voices ceased and the deep rolling notes of the organ had died away into silence, I heard a footfall on the stair. It drew near, a tap followed, the door opened, and the figure of a dear friend entered. He has long been in his grave, but last night I saw him again as in life. He said, 'I am tired. Will you walk with me a little in the court? Perhaps I shall sleep the better for it.' I put out my lamp and we descended the stairs together.

When we issued on the court the moon had risen. How pale and ghostly the roofs looked in her silvery light, how blanched and wan the flowers in their bed about the fountain, where the falling water plashed with a murmurous sound as soft as sleep! We passed the windows of the hall, now dark, silent, and deserted, and, ascending the steps, traversed the screens and emerged on the terrace overlooking Neville's Court. Around us lay the cloisters, on the one side shrouded in deep darkness, on the other side flooded with the broad moon-

beams, only the shadows of the pillars showing like black bars on the pavement. We paced them for a time in discourse, as of old, on friends and books, on Nature's loveliness, on the glories of the antique world, on the vision, the beatific vision, of a Golden Age to come. Then, quitting the cloisters, we passed under the archway and entered the long avenue of limes, where the interlacing branches cast a chequer-work of shadow on the moonlit path. We paused on the bridge over the river. How sweet the moonlight slept upon the water and silvered all the foliage of the trees that drooped their pendent boughs into the placid stream, while the white bridges, like sheeted ghosts, receded line beyond line into the distance—a scene of enchantment or fairyland forlorn!

And now, with the inconstancy of dreams, the season and the landscape suddenly changed. It was a sunshiny afternoon in May. The college gardens through which we passed were gay with the pink and white blossoms of the chestnuts, with the purple and gold of the lilac and laburnum. Beyond them we entered the fields and followed the foot-path beside the long hedgerow under the dappled shade of the tall elms. The hedges were white with the hawthorn bloom, and the air was heavy with its fragrance. Yet farther on we crossed the meadows, starred with buttercups and daisies, and passed through the grave-yard of the little old Coton church, with its grey tower rising among the trees and its moss-grown headstones sleeping among the grass. Thence by the familiar foot-path we ascended the slope of Madingley Hill. Insensibly as we advanced the season seemed to change, for now the snow-white blossom of the hawthorn in the hedges had turned to red roses, and

now in the fields around us the yellow corn, spangled with scarlet poppies, stood ripe for the sickle; and yet again the woods that fringed the crest of the hill showed here and there the russet hues of autumn. On gaining the summit we stood once more, as we had stood so often, near the ruined windmill (few now remember it!), to survey the landscape, the far-spreading peaceful landscape, before bending our steps homeward. To the right the spire of Coton church just peeped over the shoulder of the hill, like a finger pointing steadfastly from the transient tumults and sorrows of earth to the eternal peace and joy of heaven. At our feet the high road ran down the slope, and then, girt with trees, flowed away like a wave in green undulations to the distant woods, above which appeared the spires and pinnacles of Cambridge. Beyond them we could discern the low blue line of the Gog Magog hills with the white scar of the high road climbing their steep side, while away to the north the towers of Ely Cathedral loomed like specks on the far horizon, faint and dim as dreams.

After contemplating the scene for a time in silence we turned to descend the hill. Before we did so I said to my companion, 'Last night I dreamed an ill dream.' 'What was it?' he asked. 'I dreamed,' I said, 'that you were dead, and that I had left Cambridge for ever.' 'But it was only a dream,' he answered, smiling, 'for here I am, and yonder, among the woods, is Cambridge. We shall soon be there together.' As he spoke he suddenly vanished. I looked about me, but the landscape on which but a moment before I had gazed with rapture was gone, and I heard a voice like the sighing of the wind which cried, 'For ever! for ever!' I woke with a

start. The grey light of a London morning was stealing through the curtains, and still, half sleeping, half waking, I heard a voice dying away in the distance, which cried, 'For ever! for ever!'

JOHN GALSWORTHY

Quality

From THE INN OF TRANQUILLITY

I KNEW him from the days of my extreme youth, because he made my father's boots; inhabiting with his elder brother two little shops let into one, in a small by-street—now no more, but then most fashionably placed in the West End.

That tenement had a certain quiet distinction; there was no sign upon its face that he made for any of the Royal Family—merely his own German name of Gessler Brothers; and in the window a few pairs of boots. I remember that it always troubled me to account for those unvarying boots in the window, for he made only what was ordered, reaching nothing down, and it seemed so inconceivable that what he made could ever have failed to fit. Had he bought them to put there? That, too, seemed inconceivable. He would never have tolerated in his house leather on which he had not worked himself. Besides, they were too beautiful—the pair of pumps, so inexpressibly slim, the patent leathers with cloth tops, making water come into one's mouth, the tall brown riding boots with marvellous sooty glow, as if, though new, they had been worn a hundred years. Those pairs could only have been made by one who saw before him the Soul of Boot—so truly were they prototypes incarnating the very spirit of all foot-gear. These thoughts, of course, came to me later, though even when I was promoted to him, at the age of perhaps fourteen, some inkling haunted me of the dignity of himself and

brother. For to make boots—such boots as he made—seemed to me then, and still seems to me, mysterious and wonderful.

I remember well my shy remark, one day, while stretching out to him my youthful foot:

‘Isn’t it awfully hard to do, Mr. Gessler?’

And his answer, given with a sudden smile from out of the sardonic redness of his beard: ‘Id is an Ardt!’

Himself, he was a little as if made from leather, with his yellow crinkly face, and crinkly reddish hair and beard, and neat folds slanting down his cheeks to the corners of his mouth, and his guttural and one-toned voice; for leather is a sardonic substance, and stiff and slow of purpose. And that was the character of his face, save that his eyes, which were grey-blue, had in them the simple gravity of one secretly possessed by the Ideal. His elder brother was so very like him—though watery, paler in every way, with a great industry—that sometimes in early days I was not quite sure of him until the interview was over. Then I knew that it was he, if the words, ‘I will ask my brudder,’ had not been spoken; and that, if they had, it was his elder brother.

When one grew old and wild and ran up bills, one somehow never ran them up with Gessler Brothers. It would not have seemed becoming to go in there and stretch out one’s foot to that blue iron-spectacled glance, owing him for more than—say—two pairs, just the comfortable reassurance that one was still his client.

For it was not possible to go to him very often—his boots lasted terribly, having something beyond the temporary—some, as it were, essence of boot stitched into them.

One went in, not as into most shops, in the mood of:

‘Please serve me, and let me go!’ but restfully, as one enters a church; and, sitting on the single wooden chair, waited—for there was never anybody there. Soon, over the top edge of that sort of well—rather dark, and smelling soothingly of leather—which formed the shop, there would be seen his face, or that of his elder brother, peering down. A guttural sound, and the tip-tap of bast slippers beating the narrow wooden stairs, and he would stand before one without coat, a little bent, in leather apron, with sleeves turned back, blinking—as if awakened from some dream of boots, or like an owl surprised in daylight and annoyed at this interruption.

And I would say: ‘How do you do, Mr. Gessler? Could you make me a pair of Russia leather boots?’

Without a word he would leave me, retiring whence he came, or into the other portion of the shop, and I would continue to rest in the wooden chair, inhaling the incense of his trade. Soon he would come back, holding in his thin, veined hand a piece of gold-brown leather. With eyes fixed on it, he would remark: ‘What a beautiful biece!’ When I, too, had admired it, he would speak again. ‘When do you wand dem?’ And I would answer: ‘Oh! As soon as you conveniently can.’ And he would say: ‘To-morrow fordnight?’ Or if he were his elder brother: ‘I will ask my brudder!’

Then I would murmur: ‘Thank you! Good-morning, Mr. Gessler.’ ‘Goot-morning!’ he would reply, still looking at the leather in his hand. And as I moved to the door, I would hear the tip-tap of his bast slippers restoring him, up the stairs, to his dream of boots. But if it were some new kind of foot-gear that he had not yet made me, then indeed he would observe ceremony—divesting me of my boot and holding it long in his hand,

looking at it with eyes at once critical and loving, as if recalling the glow with which he had created it, and rebuking the way in which one had disorganized this masterpiece. Then, placing my foot on a piece of paper, he would two or three times tickle the outer edges with a pencil and pass his nervous fingers over my toes, feeling himself into the heart of my requirements.

I cannot forget that day on which I had occasion to say to him: 'Mr. Gessler, that last pair of town walking-boots creaked, you know.'

He looked at me for a time without replying, as if expecting me to withdraw or qualify the statement, then said:

'Id shouldn'd 'ave greaked.'

'It did, I'm afraid.'

'You goddem wed before dey found demselves?'

'I don't think so.'

At that he lowered his eyes, as if hunting for memory of those boots, and I felt sorry I had mentioned this grave thing.

'Zend dem back!' he said; 'I will look at dem.'

A feeling of compassion for my creaking boots surged up in me, so well could I imagine the sorrowful long curiosity of regard which he would bend on them.

'Zome boods,' he said slowly, 'are bad from birdt. If I can do noding wid dem, I dake dem off your bill.'

Once (once only) I went absent-mindedly into his shop in a pair of boots bought in an emergency at some large firm's. He took my order without showing me any leather, and I could feel his eyes penetrating the inferior integument of my foot. At last he said:

'Dose are nod my boods.'

The tone was not one of anger, nor of sorrow, not even

of contempt, but there was in it something quiet that froze the blood. He put his hand down and pressed a finger on the place where the left boot, endeavouring to be fashionable, was not quite comfortable.

'Id 'urds you dere,' he said. 'Dose big virms 'ave no self-respect. Drash!' And then, as if something had given way within him, he spoke long and bitterly. It was the only time I ever heard him discuss the conditions and hardships of his trade.

'Dey get id all,' he said, 'dey get id by adverdisement, nod by work. Dey dake it away from us, who lofe our boods. Id gomes to this—bresently I haf no work. Every year id gets less—you will see.' And looking at his lined face I saw things I had never noticed before, bitter things and bitter struggle—and what a lot of grey hairs there seemed suddenly in his red beard!

As best I could, I explained the circumstances of the purchase of those ill-omened boots. But his face and voice made so deep impression that during the next few minutes I ordered many pairs. Nemesis fell! They lasted more terribly than ever. And I was not able conscientiously to go to him for nearly two years.

When at last I went I was surprised to find that outside one of the two little windows of his shop another name was painted, also that of a boot-maker—making, of course, for the Royal Family. The old familiar boots, no longer in dignified isolation, were huddled in the single window. Inside, the now contracted well of the one little shop was more scented and darker than ever. And it was longer than usual, too, before a face peered down, and the tip-tap of the bast slippers began. At last he stood before me, and, gazing through those rusty iron spectacles, said:

‘Mr. —, isn’d it?’

‘Ah! Mr. Gessler,’ I stammered, ‘but your boots are really *too* good, you know! See, these are quite decent still!’ And I stretched out to him my foot. He looked at it.

‘Yes,’ he said, ‘beople do nod wand good boods, id seems.’

To get away from his reproachful eyes and voice I hastily remarked: ‘What have you done to your shop?’

He answered quietly: ‘Id was too exbensif. Do you wand some boods?’

I ordered three pairs, though I had only wanted two, and quickly left. I had, I do not know quite what feeling of being part, in his mind, of a conspiracy against him; or not perhaps so much against him as against his idea of boot. One does not, I suppose, care to feel like that; for it was again many months before my next visit to his shop, paid, I remember, with the feeling: ‘Oh! well, I can’t leave the old boy—so here goes! Perhaps it’ll be his elder brother!’

For his elder brother, I knew, had not character enough to reproach me, even dumbly.

And, to my relief, in the shop there did appear to be his elder brother, handling a piece of leather.

‘Well, Mr. Gessler,’ I said, ‘how are you?’

He came close, and peered at me.

‘I am breddy well,’ he said slowly; ‘but my elder brudder is dead.’

And I saw that it was indeed himself—but how aged and wan! And never before had I heard him mention his brother. Much shocked, I murmured: ‘Oh! I am sorry!’

‘Yes,’ he answered, ‘he was a good man, he made a

good bood; but he is dead.' And he touched the top of his head, where the hair had suddenly gone as thin as it had been on that of his poor brother, to indicate, I suppose, the cause of death. 'He could nod ged over losing de oder shop. Do you wand any boods?' And he held up the leather in his hand: 'Id's a beaudiful biece.'

I ordered several pairs. It was very long before they came—but they were better than ever. One simply could not wear them out. And soon after that I went abroad.

It was over a year before I was again in London. And the first shop I went to was my old friend's. I had left a man of sixty, I came back to one of seventy-five, pinched and worn and tremulous, who genuinely, this time, did not at first know me.

'Oh! Mr. Gessler,' I said, sick at heart; 'how splendid your boots are! See, I've been wearing this pair nearly all the time I've been abroad; and they're not half worn out, are they?'

He looked long at my boots—a pair of Russia leather, and his face seemed to regain steadiness. Putting his hand on my instep, he said:

'Do they vid you here? I 'ad drouble wid dat bair, I remember.'

I assured him that they had fitted beautifully.

'Do you wand any boods?' he said. 'I can make dem quickly; id is a slack dime.'

I answered: 'Please, please! I want boots all round—every kind!'

'I will make a vresh model. Your food must be bigger.' And with utter slowness he traced round my foot, and felt my toes, only once looking up to say:

'Did I dell you my brudder was dead?'

To watch him was painful, so feeble had he grown; I was glad to get away.

I had given those boots up, when one evening they came. Opening the parcel, I set the four pairs out in a row. Then one by one I tried them on. There was no doubt about it. In shape and fit, in finish and quality of leather, they were the best he had ever made me. And in the mouth of one of the Town walking-boots I found his bill. The amount was the same as usual, but it gave me quite a shock. He had never before sent it in till quarter day. I flew down-stairs, and wrote a cheque, and posted it at once with my own hand.

A week later, passing the little street, I thought I would go in and tell him how splendidly the new boots fitted. But when I came to where his shop had been, his name was gone. Still there, in the window, were the slim pumps, the patent leathers with cloth tops, the sooty riding boots.

I went in, very much disturbed. In the two little shops—again made into one—was a young man with an English face.

‘Mr. Gessler in?’ I said.

He gave me a strange, ingratiating look.

‘No, sir,’ he said, ‘no. But we can attend to anything with pleasure. We’ve taken the shop over. You’ve seen our name, no doubt, next door. We make for some very good people.’

‘Yes, yes,’ I said; ‘but Mr. Gessler?’

‘Oh!’ he answered; ‘dead.’

‘Dead! But I only received these boots from him last Wednesday week.’

‘Ah!’ he said; ‘a shockin’ go. Poor old man starved ’imself.’

‘Good God!’

‘Slow starvation, the doctor called it! You see he went to work in such a way! Would keep the shop on; wouldn’t have a soul touch his boots except himself. When he got an order, it took him such a time. People won’t wait. He lost everybody. And there he’d sit, goin’ on and on—I will say that for him—not a man in London made a better boot! But look at the competition! He never advertised! Would ’ave the best leather, too, and do it all ’imself. Well, there it is. What could you expect with his ideas?’

‘But starvation——!’

‘That may be a bit flowery, as the sayin’ is—but I know myself he was sittin’ over his boots day and night, to the very last. You see I used to watch him. Never gave ’imself time to eat; never had a penny in the house. All went in rent and leather. How he lived so long I don’t know. He regular let his fire go out. He was a character. But he made good boots.’

‘Yes,’ I said, ‘he made good boots.’

And I turned and went out quickly, for I did not want that youth to know that I could hardly see.

GERALD GOULD

Refuge from Nightmare

From REFUGE FROM NIGHTMARE

SOME two months ago—it may have been more or less; I was never one to write by the calendar—I found myself walking up a little crooked hill in Buckinghamshire, and paused at the joint of the road's raised elbow to look back upon a peaceful scene. There was still the blackness of winter over the fields; in full sunlight, or even moonlight perhaps, an inquisitive eye might have found a few of those half-hidden, whole-hearted, idiotically optimistic flowerlets that come long before the swallow dares to pretend a summer, before the ash-buds are black in the front of March (they were black and solid this year before mid-February, as if nature had had a better hope than man). But in the dim beginning of evening, which was the occasion of my stroll, everything looked bare and wintry enough to remind one of northern history, and the patience of British peasantry and the British soil. The sky, closely regarded, yielded a pale star or two; but retreating daylight still held at bay the advancing and arrogant constellations. The smoke of farm fires reminded one of man's existence: it seemed a tolerable thing. Not an aeroplane, not a motor-car, not a telegraph-pole or a 'wireless' wire broke the traditional passivity of the place. A horse was being led back to stable, a heavy horse of the quiet plough-wise kind. Not a building in sight could have been less than two hundred years old. Here was something, I thought suddenly, which usually has to be sought in remoter pastures: a

piece of life with the dim and ancient quality of death, its counterpart and coeval: a picture unblurred by the generations: something that did not know about the Great War, or even the wars of Napoleon: that might conceivably go on, with little disturbance, if invasion or revolution or social or commercial collapse destroyed the cities. Invention, save the most primitive, and adventure, save the inevitable business of birth and dying, and romance, save for the encouragement that darkening lanes lend to young lovers, were as far away as conflict and progress and retrogression. Experience might, in this setting, be stripped, one felt, to its barest—and lose nothing. Time, the uneasy god, was here at ease. The evening predicted the morning, but no new thing.

Strange! There was I, in a shabby London suit, a mere hour's journey from printing-presses and stock markets, yet isolated from my kind! Well, not isolated: there was the horse, and the gradual man who led him: equally kindly, equally indifferent, equally of the soil and the seasons. I am not one of your earth-bound sentimentalists to pretend I can discern more 'reality' (whatever that may be) in country lanes than in city streets; I have no nostalgia of the loam; sentimentalities in plenty I might confess to, but not that one. All the same, it was strange! I said good-night to the man with the horse, and he to me; the horse plunged by, with clanky, acquiescent footfall, enormous in the shadows. I needed reassurance; and, perceiving that one of the old houses on my route was of the public kind, I went in and asked for a pint. An aged labourer, gnarled and withered into the likeness of a tree, a portion and parcel of his own countryside, greeted me, not wholly—I think—without contempt. He made me conscious again of

my town clothes. He was eating bread and cheese, and I have, alas! no bread-and-cheese conversation. When I have said it is wonderful weather for the time of year, I am finished. He had a pint and I had a pint, and we sipped discreetly.

On the table lay a daily paper; and out of embarrassment, just to make my lack of small talk seem less discourteous—for I had read the stuff already in London—I picked the paper up and reviewed the headlines. I do not remember what they were. I know that they prefigured clearly enough, for anybody not politically imbecile, the yet more startling headlines of last week. The world came back upon me; and it was, in essence and intention, a world of fear and quarrel.

Even the blameless pacific sentiments of the particular paper gave me small comfort. Talk about 'reality'! What came real from the outside world except noise and pain? It seemed as though the human animal, divorced in his millions from the enabling contact of earth and ageless habit, had gone mad to the shrieks of his own inadequate machines. To tell the truth, the news of recent years comes together into a blur, a coagulation of vipers, a ball of woe, stinking and threatening, if one does but visualize it with the strength of feeling. For the mind, scrupulous and analytical, the picture is less terrible. One can discern tendencies. One can take comfort. One can nurse hope—there is reason in hope, and hope in reason. But the general unanalysed effect is of ugliness and screaming. Those who love peace and ensue it are confronted by the old dilemma, proved un rebuttable through centuries of bloodshed, perhaps to remain un rebutted till men come with cleaner hands and calmer minds to the job of manhood—peace is good,

it is good for the good, we must lay down our arms, we must pass resolutions, we must testify and memorialize: only, on the other hand, the cruel and the blind possess themselves of arms, ignore resolutions, laugh at easy and benevolent idealisms. So that to do what is right may be to hand over the world to those who do what is wrong—to hand over the world, and our children in it. I am not stating this dilemma for argument here. I am not thinking in terms of social expediency or ethical decision. I speak only of that queer sense of unreality, of impermanence, which comes upon a creature sharply confronted with the clamour of the countries and the peace of the countryside. Alone, or companioned only by the agents and materials of growth and tillage: alone under the sky, upon the road, between the fields, one could be sane and believe in sanity; but even that, only at the price of forgetfulness. Come into the inn, with the lights and the fire—and instead of the fiddler's old tune there is a multitudinous roar as from crazy orchestras, the tunes of the world's purposes are gone mad and bad, the noise of mankind at shrieking odds with itself rises up at one from a crumpled paper, the ancestral voices are everywhere prophesying war.

I drained my mug and went out again and walked a little way farther up along the hill. The air was darker than before, and I thought it colder. But there were more stars.

R. B. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM

Snow in Menteith

From PROGRESS

ALL the familiar landmarks were obliterated. The Grampians and the Campsies had taken on new shapes. Woods had turned into masses of raw cotton, and trees to pyramids of wool, with diamonds here and there stuck in the fleece. The trunks of beeches stood out black upon the lee, and on the weather side were coated thick with snow as hard as sugar on a cake. The boughs of firs and spruces swayed gently up and down under the weight of snow, which bent them towards the ground.

Birches were covered to their slenderest twigs with icicles. Only the larches, graceful and erect, were red, for on their feathery branches snow could find no resting-place. On the rough bark and knotted trunks of oak trees feathery humps bulged out, through which protruded shoots with sere brown leaves still clinging to them, and on them ruffled birds sat moping, twittering in the cold.

A new and silent world, born in a night, had come into existence, and over it brooded a hush, broken but by the cawing of the crows, which fabulated as they flew, perhaps upon the strangeness of the pervading white.

Even in Eden, in the days before man's fall and woman's motherhood, all was not purer than the fields and moors under their burden of the carpet formed of the myriad scintillating flakes.

But in the copses and the shaws of oak and birch a

change had come, more wondrous even than the transformation of a piece of rough grey coral, as it sinks prismatic and transfigured by the waves, dropped gently from a boat upon the beach of a sunlit lagoon.

The trees, congealed and tense, stood silent, quivering and eager for the embrace of the keen frost, their boughs all clad first with a thistle-down of cold, and then towards the tips with diamonds fashioned to their shape through which the shadow of their bark just faintly gleamed, whilst, here and there, there sparkled facets rarer and brighter than the gems of the Apocalypse. A murmur born of stillness lost itself against the blackness of a clump of firs, and yet was all apparent and persisting, as if the spirit of the frost, looking out from the north, was murmuring a self-approving blessing on his work. The sharp air hung the breath in a grey cloud against the sky. Nature was silent, and a rabbit, loping through the bush, stirred the soft echoes of the frost-nipped weeds, leaving behind a trail which seemed gigantic, with its brown markings made by the impress of his furry feet melting the new-fallen snow. In the dark woodland burns the wreaths blocked all the streams, and in the silent pools, congealed and swept clean by the wind, the little trout loomed twice their natural size in the refracted light which penetrated through the ice. The roe-deer and the hares, and the great capercailzies, sending a shower of sparkling particles from the dark fir trees when they took their flight, seemed to have come into their own inheritance; and woodmen, plodding heavily, their axes thrust beneath their armpits, their hands deep buried in their pockets, looked like interlopers strayed from a pantomime into the transformation scene of frost. The wind amongst the sedges

of the shallow pool in the sequestered clearing where the rabbit-eaten ash copse straggled close to the water's edge discoursed the only music of the spheres to which our ears are tuned, and whistled in the rowans, swinging their hanging spathes of bark against their boles for its accompaniment.

Out on the hummocks of the withered grass it caught the frosted bracken, twirling it round and round upon itself, and leaving at the roots a circle in the snow which seemed the footprint of some strange new northern animal, brought by the magic of the night from the far realms of frost.

And as the hills and woods had all become unrecognizable, the mantle of pure white spread on the earth formed a blank page on which nothing could stir without a record of its passage being writ at least as permanently as was the passage of its life.

Badgers, who had adventured out for food, left their strange, bear-like tracks in woods where no one had suspected that they lived. Roe, plunging through the crisp white snow, made a round hole marked at the bottom with their cloven feet, and leaving at the edge a faint red trace of blood.

The birds, in their degree, imprinted traces clear and distinct as those their ancestors have left in rocks from the time when the world was all a snowfield or all tropics, or all something different from what it is, as wise geologists, quarrelling with each other as they were theologians, write in ponderous tomes.

Even the field-mice, pattering along, left tiny trails like little railways as they journeyed from their warm nests to visit one another and interchange opinions on the strange new scene.

Round holly-trunks sat rabbits, mere brown balls of fur, eating the bark and scuffling to and fro, leaving well-beaten paths towards their burrows, at whose mouth some sat and washed their faces in the snow.

Across the frozen pond, upon whose surface lay a thin rime of frost, a fox had left his footsteps, frozen hard, mysterious as fresh Indian sign found by some solitary hunter on the head waters of the Rio Gila, and as ominous. Birds as they flew threw shadows deeper than at noonday on the sand, so deep they seemed to bite into the snow, as if it were determined that no living thing should pass above it and not leave its mark.

But as the desert is an open book to the Indian tracker, who remarks the passage of each living thing in the faint marks it leaves upon the grass, so did the snow reveal all secrets to the most inexperienced eye.

Even when it had cleared away, the grass remained black and downtrodden, and looked burned by every footstep that had passed.

But if it changed the woods to palaces of silver and of diamonds, the hills to Alpine ranges, and the fields to vast white chess-boards, blotting out the roads, which it filled solid to the hedges, what a change it wrought upon the moss! The Flanders Moss that once had been a sea became an ocean, for as the peat-hags and the heather turned to waves, and as the sun lit up their tips with pink, they seemed to roll as if they wished once more to wash the skirts of the low foothills of the carse. Foaming and billowing along, they turned the brown peat moss, set with its bushes of bog myrtle and lean, wiry-growing heather, into an Arctic sea—a waste of desolation, brilliant and desolate, and upon which the sun reflected with a violet tinge. As the waves seemed to surge around

the stunted pines and birches, all looked dead, extinct, and as remote from man as when the Roman legions camping on the edge of the great moss constructed their lone camp, last outpost of the world on this side of the Thule of the frowning Grampians to the north. As night fell slowly on the drear expanse of white, Ben Lomond, catching the last reflection of the setting sun, turned to a cone of fire, and at its foot the pine woods of Drummore stood out intense and dark as if cut out of blackened cardboard, and by degrees the hills and woods melted away into a vapoury mist.

Then from the bosom of the moss came a hoarse croaking, as a heron, rising slowly into the keen night air, after his day of unproductive fishing by the black frozen pools of the slow Forth, flapped heavily away.

SIR HENRY HADOW

*The Meaning of Music. From Beethoven*¹

From COLLECTED ESSAYS

IT is strange that a nation so fond of music as our own should be so little inclined to allow it the rights of intellectual citizenship. For nearly three centuries we have treated it as the Athenians treated their resident aliens; granting it domicile and protection and freedom to exercise its craft, generous in material rewards and in praise sincere if not always discriminating, but holding it aloof as a remote and picturesque stranger whose purpose we did not know, whose claims to equality we did not admit, and whose language we could not hope to understand. To learn music, with us, means generally to learn how to play or sing; to train for a professional career or to add a pleasant accomplishment to the amenities of life. We do not, at the present day, realize that the appreciation of music can be made, and ought to be made, as essential a part of our equipment, as an appreciation of poetry or painting, of oratory or drama, of the marvels of Science or the meditations of philosophy, of all that can teach us 'to find our pleasures and pains aright', to strengthen our reason and to purify our spirit.

Now here we are certainly in error. We do music a grave injustice when we regard it as an Arabian Nights' banquet spread by the hands of unaccountable magic

¹ Annual Master-mind Lecture (Henriette Hertz Trust), read before the British Academy, 20th June 1917.

and offered for the passing delectation of the sense. It is as natural a mode of expression as speech itself, and to ignore this is to stunt and curtail our common humanity. It is as capable of noble use or ignoble misuse as any other of the arts, we are traitors to the law of beauty if we sacrifice this distinction to trivial enjoyment or pass it by through indolence or inattention. It is as truly a language as any tongue that man has ever spoken: infinitely subtle and delicate, capable of infinite extension and development, but none the less based on profound psychological laws and on enduring principles of style and construction. In a perfect melody the notes follow as inevitably as the words in a perfect sentence or the measures in a perfect verse: the whole is vital, organic, growing as if by necessity of its own nature and filled with the utmost significance that it can bear. And precisely the same is true of the larger and more complex forms; they imply the same kind of creative power in the artist and offer the same kinds of problem to the critic. For the two temporal arts, poetry and music, are essentially one: differing in the media which they employ, and in all that this difference involves, unified in the sources from which they spring and the needs to which they minister. It was no idle fancy which led Beethoven to call himself by preference a tone-poet; he is of the company of Shakespeare and Goethe not less than of Palestrina or Bach or Mozart. And if we are inclined to disallow this it is because here again we have chosen to place music at a needless and arbitrary disadvantage. Imagine what would be our conception of Shakespeare if we knew him only through public representation on the stage; if we had not the volume to read and re-read, to perpend and study, to assimilate until the thought

and cadence of it run in our blood. At most we may see a given play twice or thrice in a year, and by seeing it may be stimulated to fuller knowledge and understanding: what if, to carry us from one occasion to the next, we had no better resource than imperfect and indistinct recollection? But with a Beethoven Symphony our acquaintance begins and ends in the concert-room; we may perhaps recall it through a pianoforte version as we may place on our writing-table the photograph of an absent friend, but we never think of using the score except as accessory to the performance. And in this way we shut ourselves out from that intimate and personal communion with the work which is the source of nearly all our love and admiration of great poetry. We can never fully understand music until (and it is no hard task) we learn to read it in silence with our feet on the hob, following at our leisure the development of the composer's idea, stopping to savour some turn of melody or modulation or cadence, looking back to remind ourselves how cunningly the untwisted knot has been tied, entering step by step into the soul of the master, and so comprehending, to the limit of our capacity, the secret which has been given to him to reveal. I do not, of course, depreciate the value of public performance in either art: its value is incontestable and may be paramount; but I am convinced that, under the conditions in which we live, public performance alone is insufficient, and that a more personal and intimate study will often lead us to discover beauties of which we had hitherto been wholly unaware.¹

¹ I find the following in a gossiping literary Diary, attributed to one Thomas Green, and published at Ipswich in 1810. 'It is a lamentable drawback on musical composition that the author

Music, then, is poetry expressed through tones instead of words. It follows to consider briefly and summarily what are the actual distinctions here implied and on what basis of unity they are superimposed. In this way we can most directly approach the work of that composer by whom their unification has been most completely vindicated. Now in point of pure form, if we may for a moment use that abstraction, the pre-eminence clearly rests with music. The highest praise of sound that can be given to a language is that it is musical; that it approximates to a standard which music itself has set. No doubt there are some ears to which this ordered sweetness is cloying or even painful—we may remember one oversensitive man of letters who avenged himself with an epigram about 'le plus désagréable de tous les sons'—but Gautier was contemporary with the beginnings of modern orchestration and to him much may be forgiven. Again in rhythm, the very pulse and heart-beat of both artistic forms, the balance is incomparably on the same side. The greatest masters of verbal rhythm, Virgil for instance, or Racine, or Coleridge cannot match the musician, their most exquisite measures move heavily beside the Overture to *Figaro* or the opening of the Fifth Symphony or of Schubert's A minor Quartet. Musical prosody is literally illimitable: it not only contains every conceivable metre in a hundred different shapes, but it can vary and combine and divide and syncopate, it can break into a thousand shoots and blossoms and tendrils,

cannot exhibit his conceptions directly to the public; but must trust for this purpose to the agency of others. The Painter, the Architect, and the Poet address themselves at once and without any intervention to the senses and feelings of mankind: an inestimable advantage.'

until the poet's measure stands amazed at its own luxuriance:

Miraturque novas frondes et non sua poma.

Thirdly, the poet can offer no analogue at all to the beauty of musical texture—the twining blending voices that enrich and reinforce and ennoble one another, each maintaining its own personality yet all serving a common purpose, so ordered that their simultaneous converse is not an interruption but an added grace. Set four poets to speak at once, you have chaos: four musicians to sing at once, you have creation.

Against this must be set, no doubt, the greater definiteness of poetry, and its far greater power of evoking images and ideas of human experience. I do not propose here to discuss a couple of current propositions, that the value of poetry is independent or even exclusive of its meaning, and the still more tiresome paradox that music is the more determinate art of the two. Music in this relation is clearly indeterminate: it can describe nothing, it can depict nothing, it can prove nothing. When we call a melodic phrase 'significant' we are, I think, using the word in a fuller sense than when it is applied to a line in a picture, but a sense far less definite than as applied to a line in a poem. It is true that, as Tennyson said, words are only half-revealing. It may be true, as a greater critic than Tennyson has said, that they owe much of their meaning to use and association, so that when we read familiar poetry—Shakespeare for instance, or Wordsworth—we are not consciously impressed by the unitary force of each word, but by a general flow of significance in which the sound plays a very important part. Yet even so the distance between

poetry and music is not obliterated: it is hardly even lessened. Contrast for instance any landscape in the *Excursion* with the two first movements of Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony.

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The great picture is a window into Heaven, the great poem catches the inspiration of a Divine message. But herein music stands on a different ground from all the so-called representative arts, and if in comparison with them it loses on the one hand it assuredly has its gain in compensation. It cannot, so intimately as they, associate itself with the wonders of nature or the achievements of human life—those 'effluences from noble action' of which Plato speaks; but its very remoteness from human experience means that it is nearer to the ideal world. The poet, the painter, the sculptor are bound to a greater or less degree by the facts of life and nature; if they disown this obligation they produce what is at best an amusing artifice and at worst a deformity. The musician is bound by no laws except those of the human soul, his work stands in no necessary relation to the phenomenal world but has already passed beyond. In one word, the painter manifests his idea through representation; the musician, without it. Poetry clothes its thought in the imagery of sense-perception, and expresses it through a speech that has been chiefly framed for the empirical world: music is 'an inarticulate unfathomable speech which leads to the edge of the infinite and lets us for moments gaze into that'.

Yet this inarticulate unfathomable speech has within it differences of race, perhaps even of dialect. It is an entirely false inference that because music is infinite it is therefore cosmopolitan: one might as well argue that all

great poetry is written in Esperanto. The work of every true artist largely reflects the formative influences that have gone to make up his character, and among these race and environment are obviously the two most powerful. Sometimes, as in the French poets and composers, the racial element is extremely pure, and the environment usually corroborates and confirms it: sometimes, as in Heine, the two run counter one to the other: sometimes, as in English music of the bad period, a native style may be temporarily overlaid by slavish adherence to foreign methods. But this means that the causal activities are complex, not that they are inoperative. We need not be afraid of the spectral name of Nationalism: that word, with some others of like structure, is but a penalty which outraged civilization is imposing on us for our complacent and disdainful ignorance of Greek.¹ Surely it is plain common sense that if a man writes sincerely he will write out of the fullness of a heart that has been enriched both by his inheritance and by his surroundings.

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¹ It would be good for our language and still better for our controversies if all words in '-ism' were prohibited by law: Socialism, Capitalism, Imperialism—in each of them a question begged, or rather demanded, at the pistol's mouth.

J. B. S. HALDANE

What Use is Astronomy?

From POSSIBLE WORLDS

THERE has been an Astronomer Royal for two hundred and fifty years, but there is no Physicist Royal nor Bacteriologist Royal, although during the last fifty years physics and bacteriology have been of greater service to the State than astronomy. And the taxpayer may sometimes be tempted to ask what return he gets for the money spent on Greenwich Observatory. There cannot be the faintest doubt of its value during its first two centuries of existence. Navigators depended on observations of the sun, moon, and stars to a far greater extent than now. There were no lighthouses to give them their position, no accurate charts, no wireless, and above all, a sailing ship was vastly more likely than a steamer to deviate from its intended course. Accurate astronomical tables were not only required for the purposes which they now serve; but until Harrison invented the chronometer, the only satisfactory method of obtaining the time at sea was by observing the occultation or covering of stars by the moon or of his satellites by Jupiter. And so Greenwich Observatory played a very important part in the foundation of the British Empire.

But the nautical almanac could now be kept up to date (or rather three years ahead) by a few calculators whose results were checked by a single telescope; and the large majority of astronomers now interest themselves not so much in the motions of the sun, moon, and planets, as in the distances, composition, and temperatures of

the fixed stars, or in the structure of the sun, and their observations are certainly of no use to navigators.

But that is not to say that the Astronomer Royal is not earning his salary. For the greatest benefits of astronomy have been indirect and unperceived. I fear that few racegoers as they take out their field-glasses bless the name of Galileo, who made the first at all powerful telescope in order to observe the stars. Nor does the engineer or surveyor always remember that both trigonometry and logarithms were invented by astronomers to aid them in their calculations. Again, common sense tells us that we see things as they are. It was an astronomer who, by observing that the eclipses of Jupiter's moons were later than theory demanded when they were farther away from the earth, showed that we see things as they were, and that light moves with a finite speed. When the same speed turned up in connexion with electricity, Clerk Maxwell predicted electro-magnetic waves. Herz produced them, and Marconi put them at the service of mankind.

Modern astronomy, among other things, has given birth to spectroscopy. The spectroscope which analyses a beam of light into its component colours is the only means we have for investigating the composition of the stars, and it is largely for this reason that its use was developed. And it has turned out as practical an instrument as the telescope. It has been used in the analysis of minerals and the detection of poisons; indeed, it has played its part in hanging several murderers. It is now throwing so much light on the structure of atoms and molecules that we may confidently hope that our grandchildren will learn a chemistry based on half a dozen simple laws instead of being compelled, like ourselves,

to memorize the idiosyncrasies of the various elements and compounds.

But stellar spectroscopy has done much more than merely give the chemist a new method. It enables him to study matter under conditions of temperature and pressure which he cannot attain in the laboratory. If you want to know how a gas behaves at a pressure of a hundred thousandth of an atmosphere you can watch it in a vacuum tube in the laboratory; if you desire to investigate it at a hundredth of that pressure, the astronomer will direct your telescope to a suitable nebula. And seeing that electric-light bulbs, X-ray tubes, the triode valves used in wireless, and the luminous tubes of sky signs all contain gas at low pressure, it is useless to describe the investigation of its properties as unpractical.

Astronomy began as the handmaid of astrology when men believed that the study of the heavenly bodies would enable them to predict events on earth. The old astrology is dead, but a few earthly phenomena have been found to depend on the sun and moon. To predict the height of the tides within an inch may seem an unnecessary refinement, but that inch may mean a saving of a hundredth of one per cent. in the expenses of a great port, and therefore be amply worth while.

And weather does to some slight extent depend upon sun-spots which appear according to a definite law. Attempts to predict the yields of crops by this method have met with small success, but the number of rabbits and hares in Northern Canada depends on that of sun-spots to a remarkable degree. Every ten or eleven years the number of hares increases enormously, and a sudden pestilence then wipes them out. The next year there is great hunger among the lynxes and foxes which feed

on them, and many more than usual are caught. It is quite safe to prophesy¹ that about 1926 there will be an abnormally large catch of red and cross foxes in Canada. And if the women voters can persuade the Government to appoint a national fur council, perhaps the price may come down.

¹ In 1925. I do not know if this prophecy has been fulfilled.

WAVE and FLOOD. WAVE shot out a thin jet of boiling water which caught me in the chest, and FLOOD filled the bath with cold water long before it could be identified and turned off.

No, taps are not of the first importance, though, properly polished, they look well. But no bath is complete without one of those attractive bridges or trays where one puts the sponges and the soap. Conveniences like that are a direct stimulus to washing. The first time I met one I washed myself all over two or three times simply to make the most of knowing where the soap was. Now and then, in fact, in a sort of bravado I deliberately lost it, so as to be able to catch it again and put it back in full view on the tray. You can also rest your feet on the tray when you are washing them, and so avoid cramp.

Again, I like a bathroom where there is an electric bell just above the bath, which you can ring with the big toe. This is for use when one has gone to sleep in the bath and the water has frozen, or when one has begun to commit suicide and thought better of it. Apart from these two occasions it can be used for Morsing instructions about breakfast to the cook—supposing you have a cook. And if you haven't a cook a little bell-ringing in the basement does no harm.

But the most extraordinary thing about the modern bath is that there is no provision for shaving in it. Shaving in the bath I regard as the last word in systematic luxury. But in the ordinary bath it is very difficult. There is nowhere to put anything. There ought to be a kind of shaving tray attached to every bath, which you could swing in on a flexible arm, complete with mirror and soap and strop, new blades and shaving-papers and all the other confounded paraphernalia. Then, I think,

shaving would be almost tolerable, and there wouldn't be so many of these horrible beards about.

The same applies to smoking. It is incredible that to-day in the twentieth century there should be no recognized way of disposing of a cigarette-end in the bath. Personally, I only smoke pipes in the bath, but it is impossible to find a place in which to deposit even a pipe so that it will not roll off into the water. But I have a brother-in-law who smokes cigars in the bath, a disgusting habit. I have often wondered where he hid the ends, and I find now that he has made a *cache* of them in the gas-ring of the geyser. One day the ash will get into the burners and then the geyser will explode.

Next door to the shaving and smoking tray should be the book-rest. I don't myself do much reading in the bath, but I have several sisters-in-law who keep on coming to stay, and they all do it. Few things make the leaves of a book stick together so easily as being dropped in a hot bath, so they had better have a book-rest; and if they go to sleep I shall set in motion my emergency waste mechanism, by which the bath can be emptied in malice from outside.

Another of my inventions is the Progress Indicator. It works like the indicators outside lifts, which show where the lift is and what it is doing. My machine shows what stage the man inside has reached—the washing stage or the merely wallowing stage, or the drying stage, or the exercises stage. It shows you at a glance whether it is worth while to go back to bed or whether it is time to dig yourself in on the mat. The machine is specially suitable for hotels and large country houses where you can't find out by hammering on the door and asking, because nobody takes any notice.

When you have properly fitted out the bathroom on these lines all that remains is to put the telephone in and have your meals there; or rather to have your meals there and not put the telephone in. It must still remain the one room where a man is safe from that.

W. H. HUDSON

A Wood by the Sea

From ADVENTURES AMONG BIRDS

ONE of my favourite haunts at Wells, in Norfolk, is the pine wood, a mile or two long, growing on the slope of the sand-hills and extending from the Wells embankment to Holkham—a black strip with the yellow-grey dunes and the sea on one side and the wide level green marsh on the other. It is the roosting-place of all the crows that winter on that part of the coast, and I time my visits so as to be there in the evening. Rooks and daws also resort to that spot, and altogether there is a vast concourse of birds of the crow family. My habit is to stroll on to the embankment at about three o'clock to watch and listen to the geese on their way from their feeding-grounds to the sea, always flying too high for the poor gunners lying in wait for them. So poor, indeed, are some of these men that they will shoot at anything that flies by, even a hooded crow. They do not fire at it for fun—they can't afford to throw away a cartridge: one of them assured me that a crow, stewed with any other bird he might have in the larder—pewit, red-shank, curlew, or gull—goes down very well when you are hungry.

Later I go on to the sea, meeting the last of the fishers, or toilers in the sands, returning before dark; men and boys in big boots and heavy wet clothes, burdened with spades and forks and baskets of bait and shell-fish. With slow, heavy feet they trudge past and leave the world to darkness and to me.

On one of these evenings as I stood on the ridge of the dunes, looking seaward, when the tide was out and the level sands stretched away to the darkening horizon, an elderly woman made her appearance, and had evidently come all that way down to give her dog an evening run. Climbing over the ridge, she went down to the beach where the dog, a big rough-haired terrier, was so delighted with the smooth sands that he began careering round her in wide circles at his utmost speed, barking the while with furious joy. The sound produced an extraordinary effect; it was repeated and redoubled a hundred-fold from all over the flat sands. It was my first experience of an echo of that sort heard from above—perhaps if I had been below there would have been no echo—but I could not understand how it was produced. It was not like other echoes—exact repetitions of the sounds emitted which come back to us from walls and woods and cliffs—but was fainter and more diffused, the sounds running into each other and all seeming to run over the flat earth, now here, now there, and fading into mysterious whisperings. It was as if the vigorous barking of the living dog had roused the ghosts of scores and hundreds of perished ones; that they had come out of the earth and, unable to resist the contagion of his example and the ‘memory of an ancient joy’, were all madly barking their ghost barks and scampering invisible over the sands.

The chief thing to see was the crows coming in to roost from about four to six o’clock, arriving continually in small parties of from two or three to thirty or forty birds, until it was quite dark. The roosting-place has been shifted two or three times since I have known the wood, and, by a lucky chance, on the last occasion of their

going to a fresh place I witnessed the removal and discovered its cause. For two evenings I had noticed a good deal of unrest among the roosting birds. This would begin at dusk, after they were all quietly settled down, when all at once there would be an outburst of loud angry cawings at one point, as unmistakable in its meaning as that sudden storm of indignation and protest frequently heard in one part of our House of Commons when the susceptibilities of the party or group of persons sitting together at that spot have been wantonly hurt by the honourable member addressing the House. It would subside only to break out by and by at some other spot, perhaps fifty yards away; and at some points the birds would rise up and wheel and hover overhead, cawing loudly for a minute or two before settling down again.

I concluded that it was some creature dangerous to birds, probably a fox, prowling about among the trees and creating an alarm whenever they caught sight of him; but though I watched for an hour I could detect nothing.

On the third evening the disturbance was more widespread and persistent than usual, until the birds could endure it no longer. The cawing storms had been breaking out at various spots over an area of many acres of wood, when at length the whole vast concourse rose up and continued hovering and flying about for fifteen or twenty minutes, then settled once more on the topmost branches of the pines. Seen from the ridge on a level with the top of the wood the birds presented a strange sight, perched in hundreds, sitting upright and motionless, looking intensely black on the black tree-tops against the pale evening sky. By-and-by, as I stood in a green drive in the midst of the roosting-place, a

fresh tempest of alarm broke out at some distance and travelled towards me, causing the birds to rise; and suddenly the disturber appeared, gliding noiselessly near the ground with many quick doublings among the boles—a barn owl, looking strangely white among the black trees! A little later there was a general rising of the entire multitude with a great uproar; they were unable to stand the appearance of that mysterious bird-shaped white creature gliding about under their roosting-trees any longer. For a minute or two they hovered overhead, rising higher and higher in the darkening sky, then began streaming away over the wood to settle finally at another spot about half a mile away; and to that new roosting-place they returned on subsequent evenings.

It was a curious thing to have witnessed, for one does not think of this bird—‘Hilarion’s servant, the sage Crow’—as a nervous creature, subject to needless alarms; but a few evenings later I was so fortunate as to witness something even more interesting. In this instance a pheasant was the chief actor, a species the field naturalist is apt to look askance at because it is a coddled species and the codling process has incidentally produced a disastrous effect on our native wild-bird life. Once we rid our minds of these unfortunate associations we recognize that this stranger in our woods is not only of a splendid appearance, but has that which is infinitely more than fine feathers—the intelligent spirit, the mind, that is in a bird.

On a November evening I came out of the wood to a nice sheltered spot by the side of a dyke fringed with sedges and yellow reeds, and the wide green marsh spread out before me. There are many pheasants in the

wood, which are accustomed to feed by day on the marsh or meadow lands; now I watched them coming in, flying and running, filling the wood with noise as they settled in their roosting-trees, clucking and crowing. In a little while they grew quiet, and I thought that all were at home and abed; but presently, while sweeping the level green expanse with my glasses, I spied a cock pheasant about two hundred yards out, standing bunched up in a dejected attitude at the side of a dyke and wire fence with a few bramble bushes growing by it. He looked sick, perhaps suffering from the effects of a stray pellet of lead in his body if not from some natural disease. I watched him for twenty or twenty-five minutes, during which he made not the slightest motion. Then a blackbird shot out from the wood, passing over my head, and flew straight out over the marsh, and, following it with my glasses, I saw it pitch on the bush near which the pheasant was standing. The pheasant instantly put up his head; the blackbird then flew down to him, and immediately both birds began moving about in search of food, the pheasant stepping quietly over the sward, pecking as he went; the blackbird making his quick little runs, now to this side, then to that, then on ahead and at intervals running back to the other. Presently the sudden near loud cry of a carrion-crow flying to the wood startled the blackbird, and he rushed away to the bush, where he remained perched for about a minute; the other was not startled, but he at once left off feeding and stood motionless, patiently waiting till his companion returned to him, and they went on as before. The pheasant now discovered something to his taste, and for several minutes remained still, pecking rapidly at the same spot, the other running about in quest of worms

until he found and succeeded in pulling one out and spent some time over it; then came back again to the pheasant.

During all this time I could not detect any other birds from the wood, not even a thrush that feeds latest, on all the marsh; they were all at roost, and it was impossible not to believe that these two were friends, accustomed to meet at that spot and feed together; that when I first spied the pheasant, standing in that listless attitude after all his fellows had gone, he was waiting for his little black comrade and would not have his supper without him.

It was getting dark when the blackbird at length flew off to the wood, and at once the pheasant, with head up, began walking in the same direction; then running and soon launching himself on the air he flew straight into the pines.

My experience is that friendships between bird and bird, if the preference of two individuals for each other's company can be described by that word, is not at all uncommon, though I usually find that gamekeepers 'don't quite seem to see it'. That is only natural in their case; it is but a reflex effect of the gun in the hand on the gamekeeper's mind. Yet one of the keepers on the estate, to whom I related this incident, although inclined to shake his head, told me he had observed a ringed dotterel and a redshank keeping company for a space of two or three months last year. It was impossible not to see, he said, what close friends they were, as they invariably went together even when feeding with other shore birds. It is a thing we notice sometimes when the companionship is between two birds of different species, but it is probable that it is far more common among

those of the same species, and that among the gregarious and social kinds the unmated ones as a rule have their chums in the flock.

The friendship I observed between the two birds at Wells reminded me of the case of a pheasant who had human friends; it is the only instance I have met with of a pheasant being kept as a household pet, and was related to me by my old friend the late Dr. Cunningham Geikie, of Bournemouth, author of religious books. The bird was a handsome cock, owned by a lady of that place, who kept it for many years—he said nineteen, but he may have been mistaken about the time. The main thing was his disposition, his affection for his people and the fine courage he displayed in protecting them. His zeal in looking after them was at times inconvenient. He was particularly attached to his mistress, and liked to attend her on her walks, and made himself her guardian. But he was distrustful of strangers, and when she was at home he would keep watch, and if he saw a visitor approaching the house—some person he did not know—he would boldly sally forth to meet and order him off the premises with suitable threatening gestures, which if not quickly obeyed would be followed by a brisk attack, the blows, with spurs, being aimed at the intruder's legs.

ALDOUS HUXLEY

Superstitions

From 'THE SUBSTITUTES FOR RELIGION' PROPER STUDIES

IF our original assumption is true and human nature has in fact remained fundamentally changeless throughout the historical period, then we should expect to find the contemporary world as full of superstitions as the world of the past. For superstitious beliefs and practices are the expressions of certain states of mind, and if the states of mind exist, so ought the practices and beliefs. Our age has a habit of calling itself enlightened. On what grounds it is difficult to understand, unless it regards as a progress towards enlightenment the fact that its fetishistic and magical superstitions are no longer co-ordinated with a religion, but have, so to speak, broken loose and exist in a state of independence. The Church exploited these habits of superstition and made them serve its own higher ends. Recognizing the fact that many men and women have a tendency to attribute vitality and power to inanimate objects, it supplied their needs, but with inanimate objects of a certain kind—relics, images, and the like—which served to remind the fetish-worshipper of a doctrine more intelligent and far-reaching than his own. The days of Catholic superstition are passed, and we now worship, under the name of mascots, lucky pigs, billikens, swastikas, and the like, a whole pantheon of fetishes which stand for nothing beyond themselves. No one is likely to forget how seriously these fetishes were taken during the war, what powers were then attributed to them

what genuine distress and terror were occasioned by their loss. Now that the danger is over the worship is not so ardent. But that it still persists any one may discover who will but take the trouble to use his eyes and ears. Of spiritualism, fortune-telling, and the practice of magic I shall say nothing. They have always existed and they still exist, unchanged except for the fact that there is no established religion in relation to which these practices are bad or good. The belief in evil spirits, though still common, is probably less widespread than it was, but the human tendency to hypostasize its sense of values is still as strong as ever. Evil spirits being out of fashion, it must therefore find expression in other beliefs. With many people, especially women, bacilli have taken the place of spirits. Microbes for them are the personification of evil. They live in terror of germs and practise elaborate antiseptic rites in order to counteract their influence. There are mothers who find it necessary to sterilize the handkerchiefs that come back from the laundry; who, when their children scratch their finger on a bramble, interrupt their walk and hurry home in search of iodine; who boil and distil the native virtue out of every particle of food or drink. One is reminded irresistibly of the ritual washings and fumigations, the incessant preoccupation with unclean foods, unlucky days, and inauspicious places, so common among all the primitive peoples. The forms change, but the substance remains.

JULIAN HUXLEY

An Essay on Bird-Mind

From ESSAYS OF A BIOLOGIST

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'PAS de cerveau—que de l'âme.' Those especially who have studied birds will subscribe to this. The variety of their emotions is greater, their intensity more striking, than in four-footed beasts, while their power of modifying behaviour by experience is less, the subjection to instinct more complete. Those who are interested in the details can see from experiments, such as those recorded by Mr. Eliot Howard in his *Territory in Bird Life*, how limited is a bird's power of adjustment; but I will content myself with a single example, one of nature's experiments, recorded by Mr. Chance this year by the aid of the cinematograph—the behaviour of small birds when the routine of their life is upset by the presence of a young Cuckoo in the nest.

When, after prodigious exertions, the unfledged Cuckoo has ejected its foster-brothers and sisters from their home, it sometimes happens that one of them is caught on or close to the rim of the nest. One such case was recorded by Mr. Chance's camera. The unfortunate fledgeling scrambled about on the branches below the nest; the parent Pipit flew back with food; the cries and open mouth of the ejected bird attracted attention, and it was fed; and the mother then settled down upon the nest as if all was in normal order. Meanwhile, the movements of the fledgeling in the foreground grew feebler, and one could imagine its voice quavering off, fainter

and fainter, as its vital warmth departed. At the next return of the parent with food the young one was dead.

It was the utter stupidity of the mother that was so impressive—its simple response to stimulus—of feeding to the stimulus of the young's cry and open mouth, of brooding to that of the nest with something warm and feathery contained in it—its neglect of any steps whatsoever to restore the fallen nestling to safety. It was almost as pitiable an exhibition of unreason as the well-attested case of the wasp attendant on a wasp-grub, who, on being kept without food for some time, grew more and more restless, and eventually bit off the hind end of the grub and offered it to what was left!

Birds in general are stupid, in the sense of being little able to meet unforeseen emergencies; but their lives are often emotional, and their emotions are richly and finely expressed. I have for years been interested in observing the courtship and the relations of the sexes in birds, and have in my head a number of pictures of their notable and dramatic moments. These seem to me to illustrate so well the emotional furnishing of birds, and to provide such a number of windows into that strange thing we call a bird's mind, that I shall simply set some of them down as they come to me.

First, then, the coastal plain of Louisiana; a pond, made and kept as a sanctuary by that public-spirited bird-lover Mr. E. A. McIlhenny, filled with noisy crowds of Egrets and little egret-like Herons. These, in great flocks, fly back across the 'Mexique Bay' in the spring months from their winter quarters in South America. Arrived in Louisiana, they feed and roost in flocks for a time, but gradually split up into pairs. Each pair, detaching themselves from the flocks, choose a

nesting-site (by joint deliberation) among the willows and maples of the breeding-pond. And then follows a curious phenomenon. Instead of proceeding at once to biological business in the shape of nest-building and egg-laying, they indulge in what can only be styled a honeymoon. For three or four days both members of the pair are always on the chosen spot, save for the necessary visits which they alternately pay to the distant feeding-grounds. When both are there, they will spend hours at a time sitting quite still, just touching one another. Generally the hen sits on a lower branch, resting her head against the cock bird's flanks; they look for all the world like one of those inarticulate but happy couples upon a bench in the park in spring. Now and again, however, this passivity of sentiment gives place to a wild excitement. Upon some unascertainable cause the two birds raise their necks and wings, and, with loud cries, intertwine their necks. This is so remarkable a sight that the first time I witnessed it I did not fully credit it, and only after it had happened before my eyes on three or four separate occasions was I forced to admit it as a regular occurrence in their lives. The long necks are so flexible that they can and do make a complete single turn round each other—a real true-lover's-knot! This once accomplished, each bird then—most wonderful of all—runs its beak quickly and amorously through the just raised aigrettes of the other, again and again, nibbling and clapping them from base to tip. Of this I can only say that it seemed to bring such a pitch of emotion that I could have wished to be a Heron that I might experience it. This over, they would untwist their necks and subside once more into their usual quieter sentimentality.

This, alas! I never saw with the less common little White Egrets, but with the Louisiana Heron (which should, strictly speaking, be called an egret too); but since every other action of the two species is (in all save a few minor details) the same, I assume that the flashing white, as well as the slate and vinous and grey birds, behave thus.

The greeting ceremony when one bird of the pair, after having been away at the feeding-grounds, rejoins its mate is also beautiful. Some little time before the human watcher notes the other's approach, the waiting bird rises on its branch, arches and spreads its wings, lifts its aigrettes into a fan and its head-plumes into a crown, bristles up the feathers of its neck, and emits again and again a hoarse cry. The other approaches, settles in the branches near by, puts itself into a similar position, and advances towards its mate; and after a short excited space they settle down close together. This type of greeting is repeated every day until the young leave the nest; for after the eggs are laid both sexes brood, and there is a nest-relief four times in every twenty-four hours. Each time the same attitudes, the same cries, the same excitement; only now at the end of it all, one steps off the nest, the other on. One might suppose that this closed the performance. But no: the bird that has been relieved is still apparently animated by stores of unexpended emotion; it searches about for a twig, breaks it off or picks it up, and returns with it in beak to present to the other. During the presentation the greeting ceremony is again gone through; after each relief the whole business of presentation and greeting may be repeated two, or four, or up even to ten or eleven times before the free bird flies away.

When there are numerous repetitions of the ceremony, it is extremely interesting to watch the progressive extinction of excitement. During the last one or two presentations the twig-bringing bird may scarcely raise his wings or plumes, and will often betray an absent air, turning his head in the direction in which he is proposing to fly off.

No one who had seen a pair of Egrets thus change places on the nest, bodies bowed forward, plumes a cloudy fan of lace, absolute whiteness of plumage relieved by gold of eye and lore and black of bill, and the whole scene animated by the repeated, excited cry, can ever forget it. But such unforgettable scenes are not confined to other countries. Here in England you can see as good; I have seen them on the reservoirs of Tring, and within full view of the road by Frensham Pond—the courtship forms and dances of the Crested Grebe.

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E. V. KNOX ('EVOE')

How to Live Long

(With acknowledgements to *The Evening Standard*.)

From GORGEOUS TIMES

How, indeed?

I had a strong inclination at the present crisis, considering the threatened deficit in the National Budget and the difficulty of obtaining even a small private loan from a personal friend, to alter the subject of this article and entitle it 'How to Live Short'. But I have my duty to the public to consider, and the public, for some reason or other, wishes to know how I have secured my present longevity (I am well over forty years old), and how (touching wood and keeping clear of the live rail on the Electric Underground) I intend to retain it. Let us away then.

A Careful Dietary

The golden rule of my life has been moderation and not excess. I eat and drink all that I require and nothing more. When I have finished eating I stop. When I want some more I go on again. I follow the same practice in regard to drinking. The only exception I make to this rule of moderation is in the case of greed, or a peculiarly agreeable sensation caused by what I am drinking. In these cases I eat and drink more.

I avoid tapioca pudding, parsnips, Jerusalem artichokes, and hake. Otherwise my main occupation is to see that, whatever may be going, I get enough of it. Plenty of red meat, green vegetables, white or brown

bread, yellow butter, chocolate-coloured chocolate, pudding-coloured puddings, and pink ice-cream supply me with all the essential vitamins I require and often leave some over for a friend. I confine my meals entirely to my waking hours, holding that the body can be sufficiently maintained during slumber without food, though a tin box of sugared biscuits with a picture of King Edward VII on the lid stands ever ready by my bed-side in case I should happen to wake suddenly during the night.

The absorption of an undue quantity of any plain food I consider to be a vast mistake. Five muffins are enough for any man at any one meal, and the breast and wing of a chicken should suffice without attacking the fibrous legs. Very different, however, is the case of *pâté de foie gras*, sandwiches, oysters, and meringues. I cannot eat too many of these. I make it, therefore, my rule to consume very limited quantities of plain food in order to leave as much room as possible for delicacies. I seldom drink anything but wine, spirits, beer, tea, coffee, or cocoa during a meal. If I drink anything at all between meals it is a glass of plain mineral water liberally diluted with a little good whisky, when this can be obtained.

By following this programme closely I find that I avoid suffering from either famine or drought. When I feel myself too much over-nourished to care to walk, I summon a taxicab. I have no liking for barley-water, and seldom eat coke.

Smoking and Exercise

I do not smoke to excess; few people in my experience do. A pipe now and then, a cigar here and there, a cigarette at intervals—these are all that I allow myself;

and not even these at the theatre, in church, in the reading-room of the British Museum or the lifts on the Tube. I find that smoking to this extent and in this manner does not injure the wind unless one runs or climbs a high flight of stairs. On a moving staircase, however, I find I can smoke without the slightest injury to my health, invariably retaining the ash on my cigar whilst I dismount.

Exercise is a fetish with many writers on health and longevity. Personally I find that the best rule is to take exercise when one feels inclined to take it, and never at any other times. If the desire for exercise is strong, I throw aside all engagements, whether they be those of society or business, and take it. Little good can come of regular exercise which reduces life to a monotonous machine. On the other hand, when the call of the wild comes to me, wherever I may happen to be it is my practice to follow it. On the Underground Railway, for instance, if I am told to pass down the car and feel the need of healthy exercise, I step lightly and swiftly on the ball of the foot, bracing the muscles of the calves and raising each knee as nearly as possible to the chin. Swedish exercises may be similarly indulged in during an At Home or at the office, when the impulse seizes. If this simple practice were followed there would not be so many men about to-day who consider themselves healthy but in point of fact are little better than martyrs to golf. Cold baths are another fetish. Rising from my bed, I do not instantly plunge into a cold tub. Rising from my bed, I plunge instantly into the cold air, and then go up to the bathroom to get warm again. This in itself is sufficient exercise for an ordinary winter day.

The Peril of Overstrain

In my business hours I avoid fatigue. I do this by not doing too much work—the only trustworthy recipe. When I feel that I am working too hard I stop for a little while and read a book, or go and talk to somebody, or buy a paper at the corner. Thousands of men are living long in England at the present moment who adopt this rational plan, and but for it, in the hurry and strain of modern existence, would in all probability have expired. When I have avoided fatigue long enough I begin working again, unless it is now time for another meal.

There should be moderation also in pleasure. Not more than half a dozen dinner-parties, dances, theatres, cinemas, whist-drives, or ping-pong tournaments should be attended in a single week, and I attribute a great part of my longevity to spending my spare evenings in spotting to-morrow's winners, either on the strength of the photographs of the horses or of the sound of their names. Up to the moment of writing I haven't found that my longevity has been much interfered with by my practice of riding in a motor-car. But one never knows.

Sleep is another important consideration. I do not find that I keep my health if I sleep for more than fifteen hours or less than four. I am referring now to sleep at night-time. I find that if I sleep for more than fifteen hours I have missed a meal, and this weakens the tissues, lowers the vitality, loosens the cardiac follicles, and infuriates the vitamins. On the other hand, if I sleep for less than four hours, I go to sleep again as soon as the tea-tray comes in. There is nothing nastier than cold tea. During the daytime I rarely sleep, except in trains or for a few moments after lunch at the club.

Over-excitement and boredom are states of mind which I equally shun, the first by never allowing myself to get over-excited, and the second by never allowing myself to feel bored. In whatever company I find myself I hold forth affably and agreeably to the company assembled. When other people begin talking I go away.

My life, then, follows a calm, unruffled routine, varied only by an occasional headache and feeling of fullness or a twinge of gout in the toes; and I am often tempted to wonder whether any of my exact contemporaries, however carefully he may diet himself, has up to the present moment lived longer than I.

E. V. LUCAS

The Windmill

From OLD LAMPS FOR NEW

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CHANCE recently made me for a while the tenant of a windmill. Not to live in, and unhappily not to grind corn in, but to visit as the mood arose, and see the ships in the harbour from the topmost window, and look down on the sheep and the green world all around. For this mill stands high and white—so white, indeed, that when there is a thunder-cloud behind it, it seems a thing of polished aluminium.

From its windows you can see four other mills, all, like itself, idle, and one merely a ruin and one with only two sweeps left. But just over the next range of hills, out of sight, to the north-east, is a windmill that still merrily goes, and about five miles away to the north-west is another also active; so that things are not quite so bad hereabouts as in many parts of the country, where the good breezes blow altogether in vain. And recently as all the world knows there has been a boom in wholemeal bread which was to set many a pair of derelict mill-stones in action again.

Thinking over the losses which England has had forced upon her by steam and the ingenuity of the engineer, one is disposed to count the decay of the windmill among the first. Perhaps in the matter of pure picturesqueness the most serious thing that ever happened to England was the discovery of galvanized iron roofing; but, after all, there was never anything but quiet and rich and comfortable beauty about red roofs, whereas

the living windmill is not only beautiful but romantic too: a willing, man-serving creature, yoked to the elements, a whirling monster, often a thing of terror. No one can stand very near the crashing sweeps of a windmill in half a gale without a tightening of the heart—a feeling comparable to that which comes from watching the waves break over a wall in a storm. And to be within the mill at such a time is to know something of sound's very sources; it is the cave of noise itself. No doubt there are dens of hammering energy which are more shattering, but the noise of a windmill is largely natural, the product of wood striving with the good sou'-wester; it fills the ears rather than assaults them. The effect, moreover, is by no means lessened by the absence of the wind itself and the silent nonchalance of the miller and his man, who move about in the midst of this appalling racket with the quiet efficiency of vergers.

In my mill, of course, there is no such uproar; nothing but the occasional shaking of the cross-pieces of the idle sails. Everything is still; and the pity of it is that everything is in almost perfect order for the day's work. The mill one day—some score years ago—was full of life; the next, and ever after, mute and lifeless, like a stream frozen in a night or the palace in Tennyson's ballad of the 'Sleeping Beauty'. There is no decay—merely inanition. One or two of the apple-wood cogs have been broken from the great wheel; a few floor planks have been rotted; but that is all. A week's overhauling would put everything right. But it will never come, and the cheerful winds that once were to drive a thousand English mills so happily now bustle over the Channel in vain.

Not the least attractive thing about my mill is its profound woodenness. There is not enough iron in it to

fill a wheelbarrow. The walls are wood, the sweeps, the brake, the wheels, the cogs (apple as I have said: how long were they discovering that apple was best, I wonder). Those fishing-smacks which from the topmost window we see on the grey waters do not owe more to the friendly forest.

I know a man who takes the loss of the windmill so much to heart that he is making a windmill map. He is beginning with Sussex only and marking with a cross every place—so far as he can now ascertain—where a windmill once stood. 'That will show them what they have lost!' he says bitterly. 'That will teach them to prefer steam!' The crosses will crowd like lovers' kisses in some parts, for Sussex was a county of millers, and all over the Downs now one comes upon shallow pits from which ancient mills have been dug and dispersed. Imaginative archaeologists find a thousand fantastic explanations of these hollows, and one even has been claimed for a prehistoric observatory; but all the time they are merely the foundations of windmills: nothing more romantic than that and nothing less romantic.

To me, at any rate, this map will be a melancholy document. How much more so would it be to that greatest of mill-lovers and mill-painters and himself a miller and miller's son, John Constable, could he see it! The Sussex mill-map alone would cause him to weep tears, for, though an alien, he knew our mills well, and painted many of them. Even at Brighton (such is the incorruptible beauty of these structures) he found mills to paint. One or two, indeed, still remain, but they are blackened stumps merely—only the ruins of the radiant aerial creatures of their prime, when the master sat before them with those paints and brushes whose magic

secret it was to preserve and glorify English weather for all time. You will find some of these sketches in South Kensington Museum, particularly that masterpiece of wind and joyousness called 'Spring', which depicts the very mill in which the youthful artist, when milling was still his destiny, worked; and a favourite of mine is the 'Mill near Brighton', seen over the shoulder of a popped field, that hangs in the Salting collection at the National Gallery. Mr. Salting showed it to me soon after he bought it, and I longed for enough moral courage to snatch it from his hand and run. But one's ordinary invertebrate easy rectitude prevailed, and I lost it.

Constable's grief, I say, would be deep as he scanned this Sussex map for his lost darlings. How much more so when the Suffolk mill-map was laid before him! He used to say that a miller has a better chance to study the sky than any man: that is, on land. Certainly, if he had never been a miller his own skies would not have the living truth that is theirs.

As to the loss of the miller, that is a matter that does not bear thinking about. That the elimination of this character, historically so shrewd and so genial, from the countryside should be borne with such equanimity proves the carelessness and apathy of England more almost than the rise of the dust-evolving, road-devouring car. And what chance has the English ballad poetry of the future with no millers to celebrate? But perhaps the bread boom will really bring him back. Devoutly do I hope so, for the only thing more beautiful in a landscape than a mill that is still is a mill that is active.

ROBERT LYND

The Money-Box

From THE MONEY-BOX

THE elder of my nieces had brought home a money-box from the Christmas tree at a party. It was a charming thing made in the shape of a house, with long windows painted on the front. 'How does one open it?' she asked me, turning it upside down, and tugging at floor, gable-ends, and roof in turn in the hope that something would give way. 'Yes,' I said, taking it from her and examining it, 'that is the important thing to know about a money-box.' 'No child,' continued my niece, taking it back and shaking it vigorously, 'ever put more than twopence into a money-box, unless she knew how to open it.' 'Do children still have money-boxes? What about the children at school?' I asked her. 'Oh, yes,' she said, 'but they all know how to open them, or they know how to get the money out with screw-drivers and things. Belinda's always having money-boxes given to her—mostly those ones in the shape of letter-boxes—but, as soon as she has saved twopence, she sees a toffee-apple in a shop and wants them back again. So, of course, she has to break the money-box open. You can easily get the bottom off that kind of money-box with a tin-opener.' 'But the money-box,' I protested, 'probably costs at least sixpence. Isn't it rather an expensive way of getting out twopence?' 'Oh, *she* didn't buy the money-box.' 'No,' I agreed, 'one has to remember that.' 'Then,' my niece went on, 'there's the sort of money-box that nobody's supposed to be able to open,

but that bursts open when it's full. Some kind of spring or other. Of course, the children have to stuff them with all kinds of things when they want their money back. It's quite easy. Anything does as long as it makes the spring work.' Just then, as if by a miracle, the floor of the money-box turned gently round in her hand, and the great secret was revealed. 'Good,' she cried, her face lighting up, 'now I shall be able to put some money into it. This is a sensible sort of money-box.' 'Yes,' I said, 'you were always lucky. Think of all the other poor children slaving away with tin-openers and screw-drivers. If parents only knew, they would realize that the ordinary money-box is a waste not only of their money but of their children's time.' 'Most grown-up people are silly,' said my niece, as she pushed a penny through the slit in the box and shook it so as to make it rattle.

Is this, then, the universal experience? Has no child ever saved money in a money-box? The money-box, I fancy, is not a natural inhabitant of the nursery, but is a monument of worldly wisdom set up there in the guise of a toy by crafty parents. I doubt if any child, on being asked to choose a gift, ever asked for a money-box. Not that children invariably dislike money-boxes when they get them. I seem to remember enjoying the contemplation of a new money-box and dreaming that it was already full before I had dropped the first penny into it. Children have visions like their elders, and the vision of riches begins to be attractive long before one has ceased to eat liquorice alphabets. There is always something that costs a little more than the pennies of the day will run to—a toy revolver, a concertina, a fishing-rod, a huge Roman candle, a watch, a new sort

of knife, a three-cornered Cape of Good Hope stamp; and even a child soon learns that twelve pennies make a shilling, and that twenty shillings make a pound, and that these vast sums can be achieved by saving. A child, looking through the slit of a money-box, can see a considerable extent of Paradise. On the other hand, there are Paradises less out of reach in every confectioner's window and in every advertisement of bargains in stamps at the beginning of the *Boy's Own Paper*. It is difficult even in later life to give up the positively delightful present for the sake of the superlatively delightful future. In childhood, one frail human being at least found it impossible. Never once, I am confident, was I able to buy anything out of savings. Never, after the first few days of saving, did I look on a money-box as anything but an enemy to be outwitted and, if necessary, to be destroyed. As a rule the money-box was a small tin drum. When once the pennies were in, you might hold the box upside down and shake it for an hour without tempting a single coin to fall out. Then you got a knife and tried to tease one of the pennies gently to stand on its edge above the slit and to glide forth into the light of day. I am afraid I was a poor artificer, for even this usually failed with me. There are few things more exasperating than to have had a penny on the side of your knife time after time for a hundred times, and to see it always, just as it seemed about to behave like a Christian at last, disappear into the tenebrous fastnesses of the money-box. One of the sorrows of Tantalus must have been to possess a money-box full of pennies, and, when he felt a longing for coconut chips, always to be able to get a penny nearly, but not quite, out. I, for my part, could never endure this sort of thing for very

long. The more the money-box defied me, the more determined I became, and, if I could not get at the pennies with a knife, I went over to the cupboard and took out the Young Craftsman's Box of Tools, and armed myself with a chisel. It is my firm conviction that no money-box was ever made that could stand out against a chisel. With a chisel you can either prise the top of the box off or, better still, you can widen the slit till the pennies drop out as easily as pigeons fly out of a pigeon-loft. The box, it is true, never looks the same again in either case. But to prise the lid off ruins it for ever, whereas the enlargement of the slit merely leaves it with a grotesque and irregular mouth. The untampered-with slit of a tin money-box with its prim, tight, cruel, ungenerous lips is reminiscent of Mr. Murdstone. With the help of a chisel it becomes transformed in the course of a few minutes into a mouth that can laugh—generous, Falstaffian, a partner in mischief. It also becomes¹ immensely more useful to the child who owns it. Before, it was a mere nuisance, with all the vices and none of the virtues of an ornament. Now, it is a highly serviceable money-box—a money-box which you can either put pennies into or take pennies out of as you please.

It is a nice point in ethics whether it is dishonest to rob one's own money-box. Obviously, each of us consists of two selves—the self that wishes to save and the self that wishes to spend—and one of them differs as much from the other as a man does from his first cousin. Not only this, but each of them distrusts and is hostile to the other. The self that saves feels himself thwarted at every turn by the self that spends, and the self that spends is irritated by the knowledge that the self that saves is constantly watching him and grudging him every

penny in his fingers. When the self that spends sees the self that saves stealthily slipping a penny into the money-box, he longs to cry: 'Stop, thief! That belongs to me'; and when the self that saves sees the self that spends forcing pennies out of the money-box with a chisel, he, too, feels like crying out in his anguish: 'Stop, thief! Everything in that box belongs to me.' Theirs is, indeed, a tragic position, each of them serving a life-sentence in the other's hated company and as unable to escape from his neighbour as one of the Siamese twins. Luckily, at an early period in life, one of them usually gains predominance over the other, and bullies him into silence. Life would be intolerable if our two selves were for ever dragging each other into court and laying complaints against each other before that grave magistrate, conscience. I do not remember at what date the self that spends won a complete victory in my bosom over the self that saves, but I know that it was a Waterloo. I am as avaricious as anybody, and I love money more than can be expressed in prose; but I have no talent for saving it, and the only money I ever hoarded was money that I had had no time to spend within the narrow compass of a twenty-four-hours day. It was in vain that you would have told me, even at the age of ten, that 'many a mickle makes a muckle', or that you would have given me an edifying book about a poor boy who became rich because he always remembered the proverb, 'Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves'. I, too, desired to be rich, but I hoped it would happen by a miracle. It would have seemed to me a kind of meanness to deny my stomach a bar of chocolate or a box of sherbet merely in order that at some future date I might be prosperous and, perhaps, even a mil-

lionaire. It would have seemed like saving at the price of the sufferings of a friend. Why, after all, should the stomach suffer in the interests of the pocket? The stomach is human, sensitive, and warm. The pocket is inhuman, unfeeling, and cold. It is better that the pocket should serve the stomach than that the stomach should serve the pocket. Every child who has ever broken into its own money-box knows this.

And yet there must be some pleasure in saving money, for many people would rather do this than go to the theatre or travel, or buy books, or drink Burgundy. Probably the best people like doing it, because they are thinking of their children's future or want to help some cause that they have at heart. But there are also people who enjoy saving money for no other reason than the pleasure of saving money. It is a passion like drink, and a hobby like collecting old china. It is probably a fairly common passion, and a good many novelists from Balzac to Mr. Arnold Bennett have made it a dominant theme in fiction. Does it usually begin, I wonder, with a money-box? When Cruikshank became a fanatical teetotaller, he drew a series of horrifying pictures, showing the progress of the love of liquor from the cradle to the grave. The first scene, so far as I can remember, represented a child in arms being dosed with liquor by well-meaning but foolish parents. In that early sip was the forecast of the drunkard's doom. Can it be that the early gift of a money-box is as fatal a kindness? Imagine another Cruikshank drawing the Miser's Progress in a score of scenes, with the first scene showing a benevolent grandfather holding out a harmless-looking tin money-box to an infant scarce able to walk. Ten years later, the boy is putting a button into the collection-plate in order

to save a penny. In another ten years he is smoking no cigarettes except those he gets from his friends. By the age of forty he has a substantial banking account, but he persuades himself that he is so poor that he never goes to the theatre, never rides in a taxi, and never invites a friend to dinner. By sixty he is a rich man and is convinced that he is all but a pauper. He gives up his morning paper and goes and reads the papers in the Free Library for the sake of economy. By eighty he is as great a wreck through abstinence as it is possible to be through self-indulgence—a man who has always had plenty of money and never knew how to spend it—a wastrel who never wasted a penny—a monument of selfish self-denial. It is a sad story, and should be a warning to parents to think twice before placing so perilous a gift as a money-box in the innocent hands of children. At least, if they do, the gift should always be accompanied by a box of tools, containing a chisel, a tin-opener, and a screw-driver. With these, a money-box can do a child very little harm. The only money-box consonant with virtue is a box out of which one can get money when one wants it.

SIR DESMOND MACCARTHY

Elia after a Hundred Years

From THE LISTENER, January 1935

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THE vogue of an author is dependent on the taste of the age, and even a classic is exposed to the variations of fashion. But what am I saying? In the same lifetime according to our age, in the same year according to our experience, sometimes at different hours of the same day, we prefer one book, one style, one mind to another. Lamb is a classic, but he is a little classic; and it is little classics who are, as a rule, most subject to fluctuations of appreciation. Yet in spite of four generations having come and gone, how high the *Essays of Elia* stand! It is the more remarkable because Lamb is an intimate, self-descriptive writer, since at no point is one generation more likely to differ from the next than about where the line of reserve ought to be drawn. It is this, by-the-by, that often makes communication between children and parents so difficult; they are shy or frank about different things. Thus what may appear to readers of one generation as winning trustfulness in an author, to a previous generation may have seemed spiritual indelicacy, or may seem to the next a lack of frankness. But Lamb wrote about himself so gracefully, so sincerely, that he has escaped criticism from both directions, though perhaps not entirely from those to-day who honour naked exposure and violently distrust the arts of amiability. Again, as far as style is concerned, though his graces are not those most in favour at the moment, the triumphs of

his style are clear to all who understand the art of writing. It is a very bookish style; he has a very mannered manner. Lamb always writes as one to whom words are a delight in themselves, and though no one cared more genuinely for the things he wrote about, joy lay for him in the *manner* of describing them. He is distinctly an art-for-art's-sake writer.

Once, when a friend objected to his love of archaic forms of speech, he stammered out that for his part he wrote for 'antiquity'. He could not bring himself to write a tame sentence; he could never resist a fine old word. He delighted in the vigour and quaintness of seventeenth-century English, and his mastery lay in using it to record homely, intimate experience. He acquired from the old writers whom he loved a lofty, fanciful way of treating trivial things. It became a second nature with him. His work is more full of exquisitely apt literary phrases than that of perhaps any other prose writer. It is quite unnecessary to add that he also stands high among English humorists, or that he is one of the great English sentimentalists—perhaps the best of them. His humour is the humour of sympathy, even when it takes the form of self-delighting extravagance. His sentiment is that of one who loves to share the little arts of happiness, to whom past things are peculiarly endeared because they are no more, who is content with 'the most kindly and natural species of love', as he calls it, in the place of passion. And all this, visible in his work, is borne out by those who have examined his life. One and all, the nearer they have approached him the more they have loved him. Here lies, indeed, some danger for his reputation. People tire of being told how good and yet how human he was; how

faithful though freakish; how bravely gay despite the tragedy which shadowed his life; how excusable his failings were and how right we are to forget them. Only Lamb himself could do full justice to the perverse impulse towards detraction such partiality, almost inevitable though it be, may chance to provoke in others. It is the sort of impulse he understood well himself. If you ever feel it, recall that one of the few occasions on which he showed a spurt of resentment was when Coleridge called him 'gentle' in print; he would have been exasperated to find himself referred to as 'St. Charles'.

When Froude published Carlyle's *Reminiscences* few passages roused more indignation than its contemptuous comments upon Lamb. 'A very sorry pair of phenomena', Carlyle wrote of Charles and Mary Lamb, recalling how he and Jane had visited them twice or thrice at Enfield: 'Insuperable proclivity to *gin*, in poor old Lamb. His talk contemptibly small . . . , screwed into frosty artificialities, ghastly make-believe of wit;—in fact more like "diluted insanity" (as I defined it) than anything of real jocosity, "humour," or geniality.' This passage stirred Swinburne into writing two of his most vituperative sonnets on Carlyle, and in defence of one who had written, he said, 'The brightest words wherein sweet wisdom smiled.' I mention this literary episode because it is an example of the protective devotion Lamb's memory wakes, and partly because this passage, though written in one of Carlyle's most curmudgeonly moods, also contains phrases which make us *see* Lamb as he was shortly before he died, and incidentally touch the secret of his charm as a writer. 'He was the *leanest* of mankind,' Carlyle continues, 'tiny black breeches buttoned to the kneecap and no farther, surmounting spindle-legs also in black,

face and head fineish, black, bony, lean, and of a Jew type rather; in the eyes a kind of *smoky* brightness or confused sharpness; spoke with a stutter; in walking tottered and shuffled: emblem of imbecility bodily and spiritual (something of real *insanity* I have understood), and yet something too of humane, ingenuous, pathetic, sportfully much-enduring.' Carlyle, we forgive you for the sake of that phrase 'sportfully much-enduring', which suggests that which attracts every one who reads his life (in no book so faithfully and vividly reflected as in Mr. E.V. Lucas's fine biography). And also something that gives depth and poetry to even his lightest work—a dark deposit of a tragic tenderness which relieves the restless glitter of its gaiety.

'In his subtle capacity for enjoying the more refined points of earth, of human relationship, he could throw the gleam of poetry or humour on what seemed common or threadbare; has a care for the sighs, and the weary humdrum preoccupations of very weak people, down to their little pathetic "gentilities", even; while, in the purely human temper, he can write of death, almost like Shakespeare.' So Walter Pater wrote of him.

How tempting to illustrate that! Yet if I begin to quote from, say, 'New Year's Eve', where shall I stop? That Essay is like a piece of music which modulates from one mood into another, from gravest meditation into gay resentment. If I wrench a fragment from the middle of it, please remember also how it ends.

'In proportion as the years both lessen and shorten, I set more count upon their periods, and would fain lay my ineffectual finger upon the spoke of the great wheel. I am not content to pass away "like a weaver's shuttle". Those metaphors solace me not, nor sweeten the un-

palatable draught of mortality. I care not to be carried with the tide, that smoothly bears human life to eternity; and reluct at the inevitable course of destiny. I am in love with this green earth; the face of town and country; the unspeakable rural solitudes, and the sweet security of streets. I would set up my tabernacle here. I am content to stand still at the age to which I am arrived; I, and my friends: to be no younger, no richer, no handsomer. I do not want to be weaned by age; or drop, like mellow fruit, as they say, into the grave.—Any alteration, on this earth of mine, in diet or in lodging, puzzles and discomposes me. My household-gods plant a terrible fixed foot, and are not rooted up without blood. They do not willingly seek Lavinian shores. A new state of being staggers me.'

The essence of Lamb himself is in that passage, and what a lovely passage of prose it is!

Lamb was a critic before he was an essayist. He did not find *himself* as a subject till he was forty-five. The *Essays of Elia* are largely autobiographical; and like so many of the finest products of the Romantic movement, they are in fact 'Confessions', prompted by different themes. Much of their substance is fetched from Lamb's boyhood, having lain many years in his memory unused. Those essays 'are' (I quote Professor Elton) 'in essence *poems*: in so far, that is, as they are not the work of the "understanding", that mere arguing and expounding faculty against which Coleridge planned so many treatises, nor yet a mere Defoe-like reporting of the actual, hard and gritty in its vividness; but proceed from the brooding fancy, which softens the lines of the past, and purges its dross, mysteriously, without blurring or falsification of the truth'.

Yes, passages in them are 'poems in prose'. Facts recalled in them, having lain many years beneath the level of deliberate recollection, have turned into visions; visions in which the essence of the past resides. True wisdom, if we are to believe Mr. Santayana, lies in the contemplation of Essences; certainly they are the stuff from which good literature is made. Hence, too, the charm of charity which pervades Lamb's work. When we see our lives and those of others mirrored as essences, impatience falls away. The charm of charity! How different from the bogus charm of one who as he writes is 'arranging himself in a mellow light, inviting us with gentle persistence to note how lovable he is'. How different Lamb is from many of his school! I have not time to discuss him as a critic, but scattered through his letters, in his *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*, and in his essays, are some of the most imaginative and unerring perceptions to be found in the whole body of English criticism. Such essays as that on 'Artificial Comedy' and on 'Shakespeare's Tragedies', considered with reference to their fitness for stage representation, contain considerations which lead straight to the heart of aesthetic problems, though the method of the writer has only been to report what he has felt. This is the triumph of a critic who is also an artist in his work and not merely an analyst. Lamb had a superb gift for appreciation. That he was a poet himself is the secret of his greatness as a critic. Of course he had limitations. He was more sensitive to things old than new, to things old in literature, as he was to the by-gone characteristics of places, people, and customs. . . . I should like to end with Lamb's words on my lips. He is among the lesser luminaries of English literature, but—

‘Hail, candle-light! without disparagement to sun or moon, the kindest luminary of the three—if we may not rather style thee their radiant deputy, mild viceroy of the moon!—We love to read, talk, sit silent, eat, drink, sleep, by candle-light. They are everybody’s sun and moon. This is our particular and household planet.’ And so is Lamb.

A. A. MILNE

An Immortal Name

From BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

I SUPPOSE that every one of us hopes secretly for immortality; to leave, I mean, a name behind him which will live for ever in this world, whatever he may be doing, himself, in the next. There was a time when I saw myself in the happy company of Keats and Shakespeare; immortal as they; writer of deathless poetry and plays. But there were technical difficulties in the way; trifles with which I need not trouble you now. Moreover, I said to myself, 'Was even Shakespeare sure? Was Keats?' And I wondered if certainty could come to any man on his death-bed that ten, fifty, a hundred years hence his name would be in the mouths of all.

So wondering, I walked one day among my flowers. And I looked at my dahlias, at the lobelia cardinalis, at the fuchsias, the rudbeckias, the camellia, the magnolia, the buddleias, all the commonplaces of the cottage garden, and I said to myself: 'There is your immortality!'

For we may be sure that Dr. Lobel, who had the distinction, if it was no great pleasure, of being physician to King James the First, had already given up hope of immortality when immortality fell upon him. His new method of blood-letting brought him little comfort. His closed-window cure for diseases of the lung died with its victims. His bed-side manner might be a memory for a generation, but no longer. And then he invented the lobelia. For once his bed-side manner failed him. A

lifetime of bowings and scrapings and washings of hands urged him to call it the jamesia, but the craving for immortality which works in us all was too strong for him. James was going into history anyhow; but here only was the chance of Dr. Lobel. So he called his flower the lobelia . . . and three hundred years later we are still talking of him.

Pottering round my garden with the watering-can, giving a drink here to the dahlia of M. Dahl and a drink there to the fuchsia of M. Fuchs, I have dreamed of a Milnia which the world will be watering three hundred years hence. Throw a stone into the sea and there is a splash, yes, and a widening ripple, but the ripple grows ever fainter as it travels, and in a little while it is as if the stone had never been cast. So, it may be, with our books. How little will it mean, all that I have struggled to write, to the cottager of the twenty-second century who has decided to transplant his Milnia from the back garden to the front. 'How are your Milnias doing?' they will ask each other, and I shall straighten myself proudly in my grave if they answer, 'Well'. For I feel that I should do well; yes, I have that feeling. Even in a north border '*Milnia grandiflora cerulia*, an interesting growth of neat habit', would do well.

Shall I ever achieve this immortality? I do not know. It should be easier, surely, to produce a new kind of flower than to produce a new kind of book. How does one begin? A nursery-gardener, called into consultation last summer, stopped in his tour of inspection and said, pointing to a group of flowers, 'That's a curious sort of poppy you have there. I've never seen one like that anywhere else.' I answered 'No,' with a faint touch of distance in my voice, as if I also had never seen one like

it anywhere else, and had been compelled, therefore, to make it for myself.

I did not make it, however. It just came; some sport of earth and air and water and sun. Perhaps this is how all the new flowers come. Dr. Lobel did not grow the lobelia out of his own head; his share in it was no more than the easy naming of an accidental bloom. He was at the bed-side of King James, during one of those small indispositions which are forced upon royalty, having brought with him the usual courtly bunch of flowers. 'And what's that?' asked James, pointing to one he didn't know. Whereupon Dr. Lobel, who had been wondering too, answered on the impulse of the moment, 'The—er—lobelia, sire' . . . and the lobelia it was ever afterwards. Alas! it is too late now to tell my nursery-gardener that the poppy he admired was *Papaver Milnia accidentalis*; yet so it should have been if I had had the readiness of Dr. Lobel.

For even to have one small shoot of the family named after us would be something; would, indeed, be much if the flower were common enough. One often introduces a geum to the visitor without going into particulars, but one never limits oneself to the observation, 'This is a rose climbing up the pergola'. Some further explanation is customary. Is it Albertine, Carmine Pillar, or Lady Gay?

Or is it Dorothy Perkins? She, surely, is immortal, no less than Dr. Lobel. Perhaps she herself is still of this world.¹ How thrilling to shake hands with her—('Let me introduce you to Miss Perkins. Dorothy, dear—this is Mr. Milne')—and to say to her, 'Are you *the* Dorothy Perkins?' How does she feel when she walks round a

¹ She is. She has written to me; as prettily as she grows.

garden, incognita, and hears people whispering about her? A little *blasé* perhaps now; not as feels the author whose first book has been mentioned casually in a railway carriage, and he blushing unknown in the corner. For there is something in one's name which seems so private to oneself that any mention of it by others brings for the moment a vague sense of discomfort, as if a liberty were threatened. But Miss Perkins has outgrown all that. I dare say she talks to her gardener of the green-fly on the Dorothy Perkins with complete indifference now; and if you were to say to her: 'Are you *the* Dorothy Perkins?' she would answer: 'You mean the flower? Yes, I was called after it.'

To return to the Milnia, which we have neglected a little; I imagine it as something like Sweet William in shape and texture, but blue in colour. Who was William, by the way? I am jealous of him. I doubt if he was as charming as all that. Probably he was just William Sweet, one of two brothers living in Sussex, publicans by profession, but doing a bit of gardening in their spare time. Having discovered this new flower, they called the June-flowering variety William, and the autumn-flowering variety, now out of fashion, John. Sweet (William) survives, and is thus written by the pedantic. Let us be grateful to him that we don't have to call it the Sweetia.

Which reminds me of the hard case of Professor Magnol, the only begetter of that beautiful tree, the magnolia. All his life Professor Magnol was irritated by two sorts of stupid people; those who mistakenly credited him with the invention of the magnol-wurzel, and those (like you and me) who thought that the magnolia was so called because it had a very large and magnificent

flower. In a sense he is an immortal, or will be when I have finished writing about him, but he has missed some of the rapture of it in the last two hundred years. Possibly he was a bad man, and this is his punishment. Each time you have looked admiringly at a friend's magnolia, his ghost has been there at your elbow, reading the thought in your mind, gnashing, as it were its teeth at your stupidity. 'What a lovely large flower,' you have thought; 'no wonder they call it the magnolia'—and at that moment you have felt a faint cold breath at the back of your neck, and have shivered, and told yourself that already there was a touch of autumn in the air. You are wrong. It was the ghost of Professor Magnol hissing at you.

C. E. MONTAGUE

The Blessing of Adam

From A WRITER'S NOTES ON HIS TRADE

A MAN with some darling craft of his own must scratch his head in wonder when he hears some of the things that are daily said about work. One day he finds labour put down as a curse that came on Adam at the Fall—as if Adam had never done a day's digging before his eviction. Another day we are bidden to hope that if the invention of tricks to save labour can only go on as fast as it is going now, we may yet have no need to work more than two hours a day, or possibly one. Even sages so fully accredited as Mr. Bertrand Russell propose that we should knock off presently for all but four hours a day. He would turn us out for the rest of our time to get what good we could out of a set of fine abstract nouns—science and art, friendship and love, the contemplation of natural beauty and of the immensity of the universe. Husks, mere husks, unless you peg away at them so hard that this, too, becomes work, and so gives you back the delicious fatigues you have lost.

As if we could not see for ourselves that one of the saddest men on earth is he who has made his pile in some business early in life and who only looks in at the office for one or two hours a day to bully the clerks and then return to his Old Masters and roses, the wife of his bosom and the spectacle of the firmament. As if we had never seen children or artists or scientific researchers! A normal child has no spite against work until you have drilled one into him by some form of dis-education.

You put him out in a sunny garden to play: he has about him everything that Mr. Bertrand Russell rates highest—sand for engineering science, a paint-box for art, dolls for his affections, a foreground of agreeable landscape, and the whole dome of the heavens to contemplate. No good; in half an hour he is plaguing you to let him do some 'real work'; he wants to sweep up dead leaves or to help with the mowing. He will not tire of doing it, either, except in the bodily way, and then he will come again, thirsting for toil, the next morning. So powerful is this innate craving for labour that it may take all the massed resources of a great public school and of a famous and ancient university to make a boy believe that real work is a thing to flee from, like want or disease, and that doing it and 'having a good time' are states naturally and immutably opposed to one another.

Or look at the man of science, the mighty hunter of knowledge, some time when his nose is well down on a hot scent. Offer him a release from all but two hours' work in the day. He will hoot at you. Why, when he goes to bed of a night he probably thinks greedily, 'Only just the few hours that I'm asleep—and those don't really count—and then time for dressing and breakfast, and then I can get at it again. Hurrah!'

Consider, above all, the artist. Some years ago the leagued artists of Italy, bitten by the spirit of the age, proclaimed a one-day strike—to 'draw attention', as the phrase is, to the scurvy mutilation of a portrait by a noble lord who had sat for it and then did not like it. Whether this bolt from blue southern skies blasted the impious peer is not certain, but every feeling heart knew that it must, at any rate, have inflicted a pretty smart

pang on its projectors. For strikes are deeply different things when the work you lay down is a job that suffers from some relative poverty in charm, such as totting up endless small sums at a desk or feeding coal in at the door of a furnace, and when it is one that keeps you full of a pleasant presentiment that before long you will set the Thames or the Tiber on fire with the enormous sparks that are constantly being given off by your genius. Any sound moralist will tell you that your sense of the dignity of labour, and of the moral beauty of sweeping a room as by divine law, ought to make stoking or dusting a task as amusing as that of turning out masterpieces in marble or paint. Yet those of us who do neither of these good things have a rooted notion that it must be some of the best fun in the world to paint as Reynolds did it, and quite poor fun, in a comparative sense, to dust out railway carriages. The cleaner can, as a rule, control for a long time his passion for the act of cleaning for cleaning's sake. But an inspired painter would pretend in vain that he did not mind downing brushes at all, and that football and a little racing were quite good enough to pass the time for him. We pretty well know that, to this grade of labour, work is what alcohol is to the dipsomaniac.

It shows once more the ineradicable goodness of human nature that, knowing this, we pay the artist any wages at all. Tactically we others have him in a cleft stick. A miner who will labour gratis in his vocation is, as Dugald Dalgetty said of the refusal of coined money, a sight seldom seen in a Christian land. But if the world firmly refused to give the artist a farthing for his wares, the passionate creature would still go on painting. He could not give up, and, however rich he might be to the

end of the stoppage, the misery of a long strike might be the death of him.

* * * * *

If a Fall it has been, then all the more reason to treasure those species of work which have not been deported from Eden. They may at least keep alive in the minds of the fallen some idea of what life was like in the garden. Even Genesis does not explicitly say, though it allows us to see, what the prime joy of it was—that Adam and Eve were creators as well as creatures—God's fellow workmen as well as pieces of his handiwork. And that joy of theirs goes on to this day wherever a painter, a writer, or any sort of artist is plying his trade at the top of his form.

In current talk about such activities, and even in the theorizing of learned men, it is commonly taken for granted that before a Shakespeare or a Leonardo begins to write or paint a 'Last Supper' or a *Hamlet* he has already before his mind the whole thing which we now see—indeed a good deal more than we are now able to see of the unfortunate 'Last Supper'. The actual painting or writing is taken to be a mere transcribing of this pre-existent vision into paint or words. In one of the smallest and wisest of books about art, Professor Alexander's *Art and the Material*, this grand mistake is put right. Few artists of any sort can and will tell how they do their fine things. But Mr. Alexander has divined it.

That pre-existent vision does not pre-exist at all. It only comes into existence while the technical and physical work of painting or writing goes on. To what may end by being a masterpiece an artist may come at first with a mind empty and stone-cold. It may be that 'Another commonplace model to paint!' was all that

Raphael thought as he began the Sistine Madonna. Suppose it so. Well, he gets his tackle out and starts. In a little while the mere feel of the brush in his hand begins to excite him; the cold engine of his mind is warmed a little; it inclines to move; there kindles in him a faint spark of curiosity about the being who is before him; the quickened mind enlivens the hand, and the brush moves more featly; eagerness is growing in all the employed faculties of the man; images, thoughts, memories, sympathies crowd in upon him till he wonders at himself, with a kind of alarm mixed in his delight—will he ever be able to keep himself up to this pitch, he is now so much above par, so strangely endowed, for while it may last, with spiritual insight and also with an unwonted dexterity of hand?

With an ease and confidence that amaze him he sees, infers, conjectures new things behind the fleshly mask of the familiar model's face. A wonderful creature, this sitter! Wonderful creature, a nursing mother! A marvel, all motherhood, all humanity. 'What a piece of work is a man!' So it goes on, and if he can hold long enough the pitch of this exaltation, this mutual stimulation of spiritual and technical power, a masterpiece may come of it, a Sistine Madonna, a Hamlet, or a Gioconda, a thing absolutely new and surpassing, where nothing like it had been before—just what Adam was when first made. For we are to remember that before that exultantly supernormal interaction of imaginative and technical energies began in the man, there was, of all that came afterwards, nothing existent even as a vision in the man's mind—merely the commonplace Hamlet of some old melodrama, or some average middle-class lady or well-built laundress walking about like others in

Florence. As Mr. Alexander says, 'The portrait proceeds, not from imaginative anticipation of the portrait that is to be executed, but from a lively and intelligent excitement, using the skilled brush-hand as its instructive organ.'

Art is only work utterly unspoilt, and drudgery is only art gone utterly wrong. But there was no necessary curse on Adam in this matter of work. He went out of Eden with Rome and Athens, Venice and Constantinople to build, and with all the rest of the world to turn, if he chose, into gardens where people could knit in the sun, and workshops where they could whistle over the making of delectable implements, weapons and playthings. That was all blessing, as far as it went, whatever mess the poor fellow may have since made of his chance.

LORD PONSONBY

Meiosis

From CASUAL OBSERVATIONS

IT happened not long ago that a farm labourer, overcome by some desperate sort of melancholia, went down to a pond in the early morning and deliberately drowned himself. An old friend of his in the village was asked shortly afterwards what he thought of the event. He did not call it an appalling tragedy; he did not wring his hands and describe it as a harrowing calamity. After a pause he quietly gave vent to his grief and horror in these words: 'It's a pretty middlin' affair.' This was the strongest expression he could use. It is as good an instance as could be found of what grammarians call Meiosis. The definition of Meiosis is 'under-statement so as to intensify'.

This form of expression has become curiously common in recent years, and is, I am inclined to think, essentially British. It originates for the most part with people who have a limited vocabulary and yet are instinctively aware of the weakness of the constant use of superlatives. Exaggeration fails to give the effect they want. . . .

For instance, 'not 'arf', perhaps the most common of this kind of expression, is far more superlative than 'very'; and 'middlin'', which can be still further intensified by saying 'Pretty middlin'', outreaches the strongest superlative that can be found. The elliptical phrase 'I don't think', which originated in the music-halls, has a unique property. It is a very strong negative, and yet it can also be a very strong affirmative. It can convey

emphatic dissent or equally emphatic assent. A good deal depends on the tone in which it is used. Grammarians would find some difficulty in analysing this peculiar idiom. But it is certainly very effective. There are many other phrases which illustrate this form of speech. If you ask a gardener if he has any apples, and he says 'A tidy few', you will know that his trees are very heavily laden. If you inquire of him whether there was any rain in the night, and he says 'A nice drop', you will probably find that floods are about.

In connexion with rain, I heard a policeman in London not long ago, while a torrential downpour was sweeping through the streets with the force of a water-spout, remark to his colleague, 'Pretty damp'. The reply was, 'M'yes'—as much as to say there was no need for such strong language. *Punch*, some time ago, gave a similar instance. The drawing depicted two youths looking from the summit of a Swiss mountain over a magnificent view. 'Not bad,' says one. 'Well,' his companion replies, 'you needn't rave about it like a bally poet.' 'A drop too much' as a description of absolute intoxication is a very common expression.

'Bit of a draught' a labourer remarked sympathetically to a lady battling ineffectually on a bicycle against a strong gale. While staying in a very indifferent hotel I sat down one evening to some fish I had ordered with my tea, and found when I removed the dish-cover that it was ancient enough to make me gasp. A waitress, seeing my distress, came to my rescue and said, as she removed the dish, 'I am afraid your fish is not too nice'. I thought her sympathy quite adequately expressed, because there was no appropriate word conceivable. When a politician making a speech says, 'and this is my

last word', you may safely expect another twenty minutes.

If you ask your cook if she would like to take a fortnight's holiday she will not say: 'That will be absolutely delightful; there is nothing in the world I should like better.' But the reply you will get will be, 'I don't mind if I do'; and somehow it has more feeling in it than the other. 'Some', which, I believe, comes from America, is another instance of a strong superlative, although it is merely an abbreviation of the very mild word 'somewhat'. 'Some canoe', a spectator observed at the launching of the *Mauritania*.

This phraseology is adopted very often by schoolboys. Their highest praise for a person is conveyed by the word 'decent', though I have heard the superlative 'beastly decent'. And, indeed, we all appreciate the value of Meiosis. We prefer 'He's not at all a bad chap' to 'He is quite the most delightful man I know'. 'I don't think that would be very wise' carries more weight than 'That is the most idiotic thing you could do'. And when you hear a man ordering his luncheon in a restaurant and saying, 'I think I'll have a little beef', you know he means 'I must have beef, and get me as much as the plate will hold'. 'I am afraid you are incorrect' can be in certain circumstances a more severe rebuke than 'You are an infernal liar'.

Numberless instances might be given from the war of how our soldiers, in the face of great dangers, jestingly referred to the situation with some ridiculously mild remark. A soldier who lit his pipe after his two pals on either side of him had been shot dead was heard to murmur: 'These — French matches and this blasted Belgian tobacco will be the death of me.' Captain

Bairnsfather's 'Old Bill', who was admitted to be a very characteristic figure, was the incarnation of Meiosis. This deliberate understatement is the language of imperturbability, a quality of which we are rather proud. An old lady showed it in an air-raid when, on being urged to hurry to the cellar, she replied, 'Wait till I get my spectacles', and then stoutly refused to move from the window. Or, again, a man who was shopping while the aeroplanes were overhead asked coolly: 'How many are there, and will you give me two pounds of butter?'

It is not bravado; and it certainly is not insensibility, nor is it just a trick of speech which has become fashionable. It seems to me that there is something deeper in this language, which is now so general, than might be supposed from the few amusing instances one comes across from time to time; something indicative of a particular attitude of mind and of national temperament.

As a nation we are undemonstrative. We have all been taught at school that enthusiasm is rather bad form. We prefer to conceal our emotions; we are rather ashamed of them, and we are still more ashamed of any one who exhibits them without restraint. Reticence seems to denote power, and instinctively we admire it. We have even become a little suspicious of the orator. The value of action is enhanced if it is unaccompanied by words. Many a great man of action has been practically inarticulate. Sentiments of adoration or of anguish are not for the public ear. Gush and gas do not appeal to us, so we assume the cloak and mask of indifference, callousness, and apathy; underneath the feelings are deep, but they must be concealed. Moreover, we are a silent people because we are temperamentally phlegma-

tic, and also because we realize the inadequacy of words in certain situations.

One can travel in a crowded railway-carriage or go in a packed Tube lift without hearing a syllable uttered. I doubt if this would be possible in any other country. Who has ever travelled in a crowded railway-carriage abroad in continued silence? It is not unfriendliness on our part, or unsociability, nor are we stupidly stolid; it is partly shyness, partly diffidence, partly reluctance to embark on experiments of intercourse with strangers, partly defective powers of expression, and perhaps, too, partly laziness. During the war our vocabulary, which at the best of times is rather limited, became exhausted. For our amazement, horror, or indignation we found no appropriate language. The mass of the people consequently, who are the real creators of phrases and words, had recourse more and more to deliberate understatement.

To give a final notable instance of Meiosis: when we had bows and arrows, spears, flint-locks, and muzzle-loaded cannon, we talked of bombardment, storming, battery, assault, and cannonade. When we spent millions of pounds on shells and high explosives that shattered and blasted in a way to make the very planet shake, we talked of 'a push'.

J. B. PRIESTLEY

First Snow

From APES AND ANGELS

MR. ROBERT LYND once remarked of Jane Austen's characters: 'They are people in whose lives a slight fall of snow is an event.' Even at the risk of appearing to this witty and genial critic as another Mr. Woodhouse, I must insist that last night's fall of snow here was an event. I was nearly as excited about it this morning as the children, whom I found all peering through the nursery window at the magic outside and chattering as excitedly as if Christmas had suddenly come round again. The fact is, however, that the snow was as strange and enchanting to me as it was to them. It is the first fall we have had here this winter, and last year I was out of the country, broiling in the tropics, during the snowy season, so that it really does seem an age since I saw the ground so fantastically carpeted. It was while I was away last year that I met the three young girls from British Guiana who had just returned from their first visit to England. The two things that had impressed them most were the endless crowds of people in the London streets, all strangers (they emphasized this, for they had spent all their lives in a little town where everybody knew everybody), and the snow-covered landscape they awoke to one morning when they were staying somewhere in Somerset. They were so thrilled and delighted that they flung away any pretence of being demure young ladies and rushed out of the house to run to and fro across the glittering white expanses,

happily scattering footmarks on the untrodden surface, just as the children did in the garden this morning.

The first fall of snow is not only an event but it is a magical event. You go to bed in one kind of world and wake up to find yourself in another quite different, and if this is not enchantment, then where is it to be found? The very stealth, the eerie quietness, of the thing makes it more magical. If all the snow fell at once in one shattering crash, awakening us in the middle of the night, the event would be robbed of its wonder. But it flutters down, soundlessly, hour after hour while we are asleep. Outside the closed curtains of the bedroom, a vast transformation scene is taking place, just as if a myriad elves and brownies were at work, and we turn and yawn and stretch and know nothing about it. And then, what an extraordinary change it is! It is as if the house you are in had been dropped down in another continent. Even the inside, which has not been touched, seems different, every room appearing smaller and cosier, just as if some power were trying to turn it into a woodcutter's hut or a snug log-cabin. Outside, where the garden was yesterday, there is now a white and glistening level, and the village beyond is no longer your own familiar cluster of roofs but a village in an old German fairy-tale. You would not be surprised to learn that all the people there, the spectacled postmistress, the cobbler, the retired schoolmaster, and the rest, had suffered a change too and had become queer elvish beings, purveyors of invisible caps and magic shoes. You yourselves do not feel quite the same people you were yesterday. How could you when so much has been changed? There is a curious stir, a little shiver of excitement, troubling the house, not unlike the feeling there

is abroad when a journey has to be made. The children, of course, are all excitement, but even the adults hang about and talk to one another longer than usual before settling down to the day's work. Nobody can resist the windows. It is like being on board ship.

When I got up this morning the world was a chilled hollow of dead white and faint blues. The light that came through the windows was very queer, and it contrived to make the familiar business of splashing and shaving and brushing and dressing very queer too. Then the sun came out, and by the time I had sat down to breakfast it was shining bravely and flushing the snow with delicate pinks. The dining-room window had been transformed into a lovely Japanese print. The little plum-tree outside, with the faintly flushed snow lining its boughs and artfully disposed along its trunk, stood in full sunlight. An hour or two later everything was a cold glitter of white and blue. The world had completely changed again. The little Japanese prints had all vanished. I looked out of my study window, over the garden, the meadow, to the low hills beyond, and the ground was one long glare, the sky was steely, and all the trees so many black and sinister shapes. There was indeed something curiously sinister about the whole prospect. It was as if our kindly country-side, close to the very heart of England, had been turned into a cruel steppe. At any moment, it seemed, a body of horsemen might be seen breaking out from the black copse, so many instruments of tyranny, and shots might be heard and some distant patch of snow be reddened. It was that kind of landscape.

Now it has changed again. The glare has gone and no touch of the sinister remains. But the snow is falling

heavily, in great soft flakes, so that you can hardly see across the shallow valley, and the roofs are thick and the trees all bending, and the weathercock of the village church, still to be seen through the grey loaded air, has become some creature out of Hans Andersen. From my study, which is apart from the house and faces it, I can see the children flattening their noses against the nursery window, and there is running through my head a jangle of rhyme I used to repeat when I was a child and flattened my nose against the cold window to watch the falling snow:

Snow, snow faster:
White alabaster!
Killing geese in Scotland,
Sending feathers here!

This, I fancy, must have been a north-country charm (for that grey upland region is full of wizardries) to bring down the snow. And though we are told by the experts that as much snow falls now as ever it did, we know better, and I suspect that the reason is that there are fewer children with their faces pressed against their nursery windows, chanting: 'Snow, snow faster!'

This morning, when I first caught sight of the unfamiliar whitened world, I could not help wishing that we had snow oftener, that English winters were more wintry. How delightful it would be, I thought, to have months of clean snow and a landscape sparkling with frost instead of innumerable grey featureless days of rain and raw winds. I began to envy my friends in such places as the Eastern States of America and Canada, who can count upon a solid winter every year and know that the snow will arrive by a certain date and will remain, without degenerating into black slush, until Spring

is close at hand. To have snow and frost and yet a clear sunny sky and air as crisp as a biscuit—this seemed to me happiness indeed. And then I saw that it would never do for us. We should be sick of it in a week. After the first day the magic would be gone and there would be nothing left but the unchanging glare of the day and the bitter cruel nights. It is not the snow itself, the sight of the blanketed world, that is so enchanting, but the first coming of the snow, the sudden and silent change. Out of the relations, for ever shifting and unanticipated, of wind and water comes a magical event. Who would change this state of things for a steadily recurring round, an earth governed by the calendar? It has been well said that while other countries have a climate, we alone in England have weather. There is nothing duller than climate, which can be converted into a topic only by scientists and hypochondriacs. But weather is our earth's Cleopatra, and it is not to be wondered at that we, who must share her gigantic moods, should be for ever talking about her. Once we were settled in America, Siberia, Australia, where there is nothing but a steady pact between climate and the calendar, we should regret her very naughtinesses, her wilful pranks, her gusts of rage, and sudden tears. Waking in a morning would no longer be an adventure. Our weather may be fickle but it is no more fickle than we are, and only matches our inconstancy with her changes. Sun, wind, snow, rain, how welcome they are at first and how soon we grow weary of them! If this snow lasts a week I shall be heartily sick of it and glad to speed its going. But its coming has been an event. To-day has had a quality, an atmosphere, quite different from that of yesterday, and I have moved through it feeling a slightly different person, as if I were

staying with new friends or had suddenly arrived in Norway. A man might easily spend five hundred pounds trying to break the crust of indifference in his mind, and yet feel less than I did this morning. Thus there is something to be said for leading the life of a Jane Austen character.

SIR ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH

The Popular Conception of a Poet

From ADVENTURES IN CRITICISM

WHAT seems to me chiefly remarkable in the popular conception of a poet is its unlikeness to the truth. Misconception in this case has been flattered, I fear, by the poets themselves:

‘The poet in a golden clime was born,
With golden stars above;
Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
The love of love.
He saw thro’ life and death, thro’ good and ill;
He saw thro’ his own soul.
The marvel of the Everlasting Will,
An open scroll,
Before him lay.’ . . .

I should be sorry to vex any poet’s mind with my shallow wit; but this passage always reminds me of the delusions of the respectable Glendower:

‘At my birth
The frame and huge foundation of the earth
Shak’d like a coward.’

—and Hotspur’s interpretation (slightly petulant, to be sure), ‘Why, so it would have done at the time if your mother’s cat had but kittened, though you yourself had never been born.’ I protest that I reverence poetry and the poets: but at the risk of being warned off the holy ground as a ‘dark-browed sophist’, must declare my plain opinion that the above account of the poet’s birth and native gifts does not consist with fact.

Yet it consents with the popular notion, which you may find presented or implied month by month and week by week, in the reviews; and even day by day—for it has found its way into the newspapers. Critics have observed that considerable writers fall into two classes—

- (1) Those who start with their heads full of great thoughts, and are from the first occupied rather with their matter than with the manner of expressing it.
- (2) Those who begin with the love of expression and intent to be artists in words, *and come through expression to profound thought.*

Now, for some reason it is fashionable just now to account Class 1 the more respectable; a judgement to which, considering that Virgil and Shakespeare belong to Class 2, I refuse my assent. It is fashionable to construct an imaginary figure out of the characteristics of Class 1, and set him up as the Typical Poet. The poet at whose nativity Tennyson assists in the above verses of course belongs to Class 1. A babe so richly dowered can hardly help his matter overcrowding his style; at least, to start with.

But this is not all. A poet who starts with this tremendous equipment can hardly help being something too much for the generation in which he is born. Consequently, the Typical Poet is misunderstood by his contemporaries, and probably persecuted. In his own age his is a voice crying in the wilderness; in the wilderness he speeds the 'viewless arrows of his thought'; which fly far, and take root as they strike earth, and blossom; and so Truth multiplies, and in the end (most likely after his death) the Typical Poet comes by his own.

Such is the popular conception of the Typical Poet,

and I observe that it fascinates even educated people. I have in mind the recent unveiling of Mr. Onslow Ford's Shelley Memorial at University College, Oxford. Those who assisted at that ceremony were for the most part men and women of high culture. Excesses such as affable Members of Parliament commit when distributing school prizes or opening free public libraries were clearly out of the question. Yet even here, and almost within the shadow of Bodley's great library, speaker after speaker assumed as axiomatic this curious fallacy—that a poet is necessarily a thinker in advance of his age, and therefore peculiarly liable to persecution at the hands of his contemporaries.

But logic, I believe, still flourishes in Oxford; and induction still has its rules. Now, however many different persons Homer may have been, I cannot remember that one of him suffered martyrdom, or even discomfort, on account of his radical doctrine. I seem to remember that Aeschylus enjoyed the esteem of his fellow citizens, sided with the old aristocratic party, and lived long enough to find his own tragedies considered archaic; that Sophocles, towards the end of a very prosperous life, was charged with senile decay and consequent inability to administer his estates—two infirmities which even his accusers did not seek to connect with advanced thinking; and that Euripides, though a technical innovator, stood hardly an inch ahead of the fashionable dialectic of his day, and suffered only from the ridicule of his comic contemporaries and the disdain of his wife—misfortunes incident to the most respectable. Pindar and Virgil were court favourites, repaying their patrons in golden song. Dante, indeed suffered banishment; but his banishment was just a move in a political (or rather a family) game.

Petrarch and Ariosto were not uncomfortable in their generations. Chaucer and Shakespeare lived happy lives and sang in the very key of their own times. Puritanism waited for its hour of triumph to produce its great poet, who lived unmolested when the hour of triumph passed and that of reprisals succeeded. Racine was a royal pensioner; Goethe a chamberlain and the most admired figure of his time. Of course, if you hold that these poets one and all pale their ineffectual fires before the radiant Shelley, our argument must go a few steps farther back. I have instanced them as acknowledged kings of song.

Tennyson was not persecuted. He was not (and more honour to him for his clearness) even misunderstood. I have never met with the contention that he stood an inch ahead of the thought of his time. As for seeing through death and life and his own soul, and having the marvel of the everlasting will spread before him like an open scroll—well, to begin with, I doubt if these things ever happened to any man. Heaven surely has been, and is, more reticent than the verse implies. But if they ever happened, Tennyson most certainly was not the man they happened to. What Tennyson actually sang, till he taught himself to sing better, was:

‘Airy, fairy Lilian,
Flitting, fairy Lilian,
When I ask her if she love me,
Claps her tiny hands above me,
Laughing all she can;
She’ll not tell me if she love me,
Cruel little Lillian.’

There is not much of the scorn of scorn, or the love of love, or the open scroll of the everlasting will, about *Cruel Little Lilian*. But there is a distinct striving after style—

a striving that, as every one knows, ended in mastery: and through style Tennyson reached such heights of thought as he was capable of. To the end his thought remained inferior to his style: and to the end the two in him were separable, whereas in poets of the very first rank they are inseparable. But that, towards the end, his style lifted his thought to heights of which even *In Memoriam* gave no promise cannot, I think, be questioned by any student of his collected works.

Tennyson belongs, if ever poet belonged, to Class 2: and it is the prettiest irony of fate that, having unreasonably belauded Class 1, he is now being found fault with for not conforming to the supposed requirements of that Class. He, who spoke of the poet as of a seer 'through life and death', is now charged with seeing but a short way beyond his own nose. The Rev. Stopford Brooke finds that he had little sympathy with the aspirations of the struggling poor; that he bore himself coldly towards the burning questions of the hour; that, in short, he stood anywhere but in advance of his age. As if plenty of people were not interested in these things! Why, I cannot step out into the street without running against somebody who is in advance of the times on some point or another.

Virgil and Shakespeare were neither martyrs nor preachers despised in their generation. I have said that as poets they also belong to Class 2. Will a champion of the Typical Poet (new style) dispute this, and argue that Virgil and Shakespeare, though they escaped persecution, yet began with matter that over-weighted their style—with deep stuttered thoughts—in fine, with a Message to their Time? I think that view can hardly be maintained. We have the *Eclogues* before the *Aeneid*; and

The Comedy of Errors before *As You Like It*. Expression comes first; and through expression, thought. These are the greatest names, or of the greatest: and they belong to Class 2.

Again, no English poetry is more thoroughly informed with thought than Milton's. Did he find big thoughts hustling within him for utterance? And did he at an early age stutter in numbers till his oppressed soul found relief? And was it thus that he attained the glorious manner of

'Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn. . . .'

—and so on. No, to be short, it was not. At the age of twenty-four, or thereabouts, he deliberately proposed to himself to be a great poet. To this end he practised and studied, and travelled unweariedly until his thirty-first year. Then he tried to make up his mind what to write about. He took some sheets of paper—they are to be seen at this day in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge—and set down no less than ninety-nine subjects for his proposed *magnum opus*, before he could decide upon *Paradise Lost*. To be sure, when the *magnum opus* was written it fetched £5 only. But even this does not prove that Milton was before his age. Perhaps he was behind it. *Paradise Lost* appeared in 1667: in 1657 it might have fetched considerably more than £5.

If the Typical Poet have few points in common with Shakespeare or Milton, I fear that the Typical Poet begins to be in a bad way.

Shall we try Coleridge? He had 'great thoughts'—thousands of them. On the other hand, he never had the slightest difficulty in uttering them, in prose. His great

achievements in verse—his *Genevieve*, his *Christabel*, his *Kubla Khan*, his *Ancient Mariner*—are achievements of expression. When they appeal from the senses to the intellect their appeal is usually quite simple.

‘He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small.’

No, I am afraid Coleridge is not the Typical Poet.

On the whole, I suspect the Typical Poet to be a hasty generalization from Shelley.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY

Milton and the Grand Style

From COLLECTED ESSAYS AND PAPERS, vol. iii

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FOR myself, I should want, outside of Dante and Shakespeare and Aeschylus and Lucretius, no better example of the grand style in poetry than *Lycidas* itself. For variety of grandeur, I do not think you can find any passage of equal length in the *Paradises* to match it: and if the selection surprises any one, I fear he must be under the delusion which, according to Schlegel, some one was witty enough to ascribe to Burke—that ‘the Sublime is a grenadier with very large whiskers’. Even the too famous outburst of sectarianism—to which I have the strongest personal objection as a matter of history and opinion, and which some of the stanchest of Milton’s admirers have admitted to be an error of taste and art—seems to me, for all that, not to lose grandeur of form. And why? Because the supremacy of expression and phrase and verse remains—the discord and the declension, even to those who find them such, are in the sentiment only.

I do not know whether any one has ever been rash enough, or perverse enough, to attempt to ‘set’ *Lycidas*. He would deserve penal servitude for life with two barrel-organs playing different tunes, out of time, under the windows of his cell—if only for the utter superfluity of his naughtiness. Even if, *per impossible*, a musical accompaniment could be composed that should not jar with the piece, it must necessarily drown, or at least

draw attention from, the poetical music which this grandeur of style gives and includes inevitably in itself. We know from the Cambridge MS. what pains Milton took with the composition in the smallest details: and we know likewise that his alterations and selections of alternative were (what is by no means invariably the case when poets alter and select) almost always decided improvements. All of them, I think it may be said without rashness, tend in the direction of still further exalting this grandeur of style by word and sound-arrangement, colour, outline. In one of the very grandest passages of all, one of the most perfect phrases in English poetry—

Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,

Where the great vision of the guarded mount

Looks towards Namancos and Bayona's hold—

we know, for instance, that he had at first written 'Corineus', a name just as good in itself as 'Bellerus', well known to most of his probable readers in the fables of the chroniclers who had the monopoly of the history of England, but, as it happens, concerting, symphonizing, less well with the rest of the passage in sound. So he justly coined 'Bellerus' from 'Belarium', and gave him an extra *l* 'for love and for euphony' as a christening gift.

There are other points about this triplet too well known for emphasizing, now and here in particular: but it may well serve as text for a few words on that mighty engine of grandeur of style in the use of which no one has ever surpassed Milton—the employment of proper names. No device of his that touches style is more celebrated; none, perhaps, has been more violently disliked by those who cannot taste him. His conscious reasons for adopting it may be variously guessed at. There were the concurrent examples of the ancients

whom he revered and the medieval writers whom he really loved—for there never was, in all literature, such a blend of Classic and Romantic as Milton. There was the foible of the age—and not a bad foible either—for the putting in evidence of learning—for giving, as it were, key- and catch-words which brother students might recognize, and which might awake in them, as in himself, pleasant trains of association and remembrance. There was the delight in a wide survey of times and countries, of looking back to the famous men our fathers that were before us—of knitting his own literature to the literature of Spenser and Ariosto, of Dante and Petrarch, of all the great poets and prosemen of ancient times. But the master inducement must have been really, whatever it was consciously, the power and beauty of the words themselves—the combination of attractive strangeness, freedom from vulgarity, and intrinsic harmony. You will never find Milton bringing in an ugly name: he would have agreed with Boileau there, though he would have had nothing of Boileau's arbitrary and finical notions as to what was ugly. And so he scatters the light and colour and music of these names all over his verse—seeming to grow fonder and fonder of the practice as he grows older, from the consummate but not lavish examples of it in *Lycidas* itself down to the positive revels of nomenclature—geographical, mythological, romantic—which are to be found in *Paradise Regained*.

But Milton does not depend on these 'purple stripes that give brightness to the dress' things that, as such and in the phrase just used, even the sober taste of Quintilian approved. His 'common vocabulary'—a 'common' which is made so uncommon—is as grand as his 'proper',

and the grandeur is by no means always achieved by unusual diction in individual words, though it sometimes is. His oddities of spelling—'sovrán', 'harald', 'murtherer', and the rest—conduce very little to it, if, indeed, they are not something of a drawback, as freaks of this kind always are. But his selection of words and his arrangement of them are simply consummate: and nothing could better illustrate and confirm the famous doctrine of Longinus that beautiful words are the very light of thought, or the still more audaciously thorough-going principle of Dionysius of Halicarnassus that you can trace the source of beautiful style right down or up to beautiful *letters*. Let us open—it cannot be opened too often—our *Lycidas* yet once more. It is true that there is such a blaze of the grand style all through it that it is difficult to isolate any particular ray: or rather to select any particular ray for isolation and analysis. But the difficulty only arises from their number, and the unbroken succession of them. Take almost the earliest—that of the second line. He wants to tell us that myrtle withers and that ivy is evergreen. It is not all-important, but it is connected with the theme and not a mere decorative addition; it is worthy of the grand style, and it has it.

Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere
summons to its mere contrast of natural fact the aid of the most cunning contrast of vowel sound and arrangement of rhythm. Look down a few lines and find the phrases which tip each line for four running—'*lofty rhyme*', '*watery bier*', '*parching wind*', '*melodious tear*'. 'Oh,' says the objector, 'anybody can pile on adjectives.' Yes; but can anybody pile on *these* adjectives? In a certain other school the '*gradus epithet*' is a well-known orna-

mental addition. You can often, if not most often, take it away without spoiling the sense, or substitute half a dozen others without much affecting that sense. Here you cannot. 'Lofty' keys on directly and almost inevitably to 'build' which has come before; 'watery' is necessary to the occasion, 'parching' independently of its value as sound is wanted as a contrast to 'watery', and 'melodious' tear is hardly a mere epithet at all. It expresses 'tears *with* melody'—the melody of lament and regret. That is how the grand style uses epithets: and how the *gradus* does not suggest their use.

Again, alliteration, it sometimes has been held, is a childish thing—perhaps worse—a foolish and tawdry bedizenment. Is it? Try, for instance, such a phrase as—

The swart star sparely looks.

Try it without the alliteration—

The fierce star rarely looks.

Try it with the adverb which Milton himself once thought of substituting—'stintly'; try it with anything but this cunning variation of the same 's' alliteration with a different subsidiary consonant and the almost more cunning selection of the different values of the same vowel. Your ear, if you happen to possess one, will tell you of the heavy change.

Try 'the *embattled* mount' (an excellent phrase in itself) for 'the guarded mount' in the passage cited above. Cut off

Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore

(it is not needed in sense) from the verse paragraph to which it belongs and see what *that* change does. Roll over on the palate of your mind such expressions as 'Clear Spirit', 'Broad rumour'. Weigh, measure, adjust to each

other, and consider the adjustment of such words as the constituents of the line—

To scorn delights and live laborious days.

You will begin, I suspect, to think more nobly of the Dionysian 'beautiful letters' than to hold them the mere 'rhetoricians' tools' which they have often been considered: and you will estimate them at their due worth as constituents, in their turn, of the grand style. And if contrast is wanted, take what some, I believe, have considered an exquisitely pathetic passage—what is truly and genuinely pathetic in substance—from a poet whom Mr. Arnold, while exalting him above all but the first two of our poets, pronounced to have no 'style at all':

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide,
But there was neither sound nor sight,
To serve them for a guide.

As pathetic as you like in substance: perhaps (it is no matter, but it may be mentioned) expressing a more genuine, certainly a deeper sorrow than that of Milton for King. But of the grand style nothing—intentionally nothing if you please, but nothing.

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GEORGE SAMPSON

Humane Education

From ENGLISH FOR THE ENGLISH

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A HUMANE education has no material end in view. It aims at making men, not machines; it aims at giving every human creature the fullest development possible to it. Its cardinal doctrine is 'the right of every human soul to enter, unhindered except by the limitation of its own powers and desires, into the full spiritual heritage of the race'. It aims at giving 'the philosophic temper, the gentle judgement, the interest in knowledge and beauty for their own sake' that mark the harmoniously developed man. Humanism is a matter of life, not of a living. We pretend to believe this, but our practice betrays us; for the latest argument in defence of the 'Greats' man is that certain business people prefer him to any other. Would the value of his education be less if they didn't? A whole book has been produced in America to prove that the classics are a sound business proposition. Well, we haven't got quite to that depth here, yet. Some of us still cling to the old belief that there are things in life immeasurable even in dollars. I have in earlier pages denounced the prevalent and pernicious doctrine that elementary education is the process of fitting children to become factory hands or domestic servants. I want to denounce with equal earnestness the prevalent and pernicious doctrine that education is the process of unfitting children to become factory hands or domestic servants. When teachers urge

children to study for the sake of getting good positions, do they not realize how they are falsifying the currency of life? To suggest to boys that a clerk is something better than a carpenter, an insurance-agent better than a brick-layer is entirely wrong. It is not the extension of education to all that is socially dangerous, but the belief that education ought to mean a black-coated calling. Yet no people are more frequently guilty than teachers of suggesting that a boy is 'too good' to go into a workshop and ought to go into an office. The County Councillor who recently urged that as ninety per cent. of the elementary school children would have to go into manual labour they did not need a good education is not more dangerous to society than the teachers who openly or tacitly believe that if elementary school children receive a good education they ought not to go into manual labour. Teachers, especially the teachers in elementary schools, are the last persons on earth who can believe that all men are born equal; they should be the last persons on earth to countenance the belief that a manual labourer who is educated is fitted for something better than manual labour. Surely the experiences of the war should have taught us that it is not what a man has to do that degrades him, but what he is, in habit and association. We must get into our minds the vital truth that education is our contribution to the whole twenty-four hours of man, and not merely to the eight or six or five that he sells to an employer. Vocational or professional training, as we have said, may or may not be education; but into the early foundation stages of education the circumstances of occupation must never be allowed to enter. We want the educated boy to rise; but we want him to rise above himself, not above some-

body else. If we teach the village boy to read for himself and think for himself, if we give him, not mere instruction or information, but the ability to take a view of things and share in man's spiritual heritage, it is not because we want him to grow up into the village squire, but because we want him to walk

in glory and in joy

Following his plough, along the mountain side.

The beginnings of a humane education here advocated will not involve a domestic revolution, or a rearrangement of the social system, or a new scale of moral values, or a preference of one sort of -ocracy or -ism to any other, or an upheaval of any sort. A humane education is a possession in which rich and poor can be equal without disturbance to their material possessions.

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DIXON SCOTT

Joy of Criticism

From 'Mr. Granville Barker and an Alibi' MEN OF LETTERS (1916)

ONE of the chief joys of criticism is the joy of detection—detection not merely of some secret of style, some technical trick or caprice, but an actual hounding-down of a live human being, a regular, ding-dong, Dartmoor hue-and-cry. It is the greatest of games. I know nothing like it. Here in your hand you hold a book—a little cabinet of mimic scenes; it is a magic box into which, by the aid of the talisman of letters, you can positively creep and then go roaming through as in a world. Well, all the sights that now spread round you, all the landscapes, gardens, groves, and all the flitting figures who pass to and fro and talk there, are simply parts of a private kingdom, a sort of Xanadu retreat, built by the artist for his perfect habitation—a secret place where he can fling off all disguise and live completely, with a sincerity impossible outside. There alone his soul, escaped, can frame a world to fit his needs; there only does he dare to be himself. And there only, accordingly, can you hope to hunt him down, and catch him with his character unmasked. From the clues of dropped metaphors—by the trails of well-used rhythms—from scraps of conversation heard by eavesdropping among his characters—in and out, ruthlessly, you track him through the maze, until the last barrier breaks, and you are on him. A queer moment, that! One never quite gets hardened—so staggering is it to discover how little he resembles the tax-paying and be-photographed *simulacra* who pass

for him so plausibly outside. It is on these differences that you fasten, marking, measuring, comparing: your sketch-book has another scalp. After that he can rejoin his imposing outside proxies when he will—they will never impose on you again. You know them now for mere doorkeepers; you know exactly what they ward; and the majestic way they carry off their mischievous pretence will always fill you, when you meet them, with a deep and holy glee.

Brutal? Not a bit of it. They say a fox likes seeing scarlet because it gives him, these tame times, his only opportunity for showing the world what he can really do; and though that is just as may be, it is at least quite certain that the true writer, in his ambushade, simply pines to be pursued and passionately hopes that you may win. To be vanquished is his victory—to escape is his defeat; for cryptic, till you capture him, must still in part remain his work; enigmatic, all these groves without a guide. Those outcries of remonstrance that sometimes rend the air, expostulations about 'unwarranted intrusions', are only raised when some poor critic, too perfectly deceived, begins tiresomely to dog the embodiments outside the gate, in the tedious manner of the illustrated interviewer. Only be shameless enough, merciless enough, only smash your way remorselessly into his shyest haunts and recesses, and your quarry, when you compel him to throw up his hands, will really be wanting to wave them with joy. For you will have done what in his heart of hearts he hungers for us all to do—won the freedom of his kingdom by the only possible way, gained the single certain key to its design—and are now, at last, in a position to appreciate properly the points of his self-created world—that little world which

is always, willy-nilly, whether he be realist or romanticist, a Barker, Bennett, Barrie, James, or Wells, just a mimic model of his vision of what the outside world would look like if only it were cleaned of its encumbering litter and debris. All our artists, in that sense, are Futurists, prophets; all their books are books of revelation.

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SIR JOHN SQUIRE

Fire and the Heart of Man

From LIFE AT THE MERMAID

IT was eleven o'clock at night. I was preparing to write an essay. I was going to write it about a book. The book was a good and a beautiful book; it filled me with the noblest thoughts, made me a better man and fit for the most heroic actions. It was full of sagacity, of sound reasoning, of imagination checked by sense, of reflection shot through with vision. It was not only a good book, but a large and solid book, a book to be chewed like the cud, remembered and returned to, a virtuous and courageous book, a book of mettle, a book of weight. Unfortunately, or fortunately, just as I had finished reading the book and was biting the end of my fountain-pen, wondering how in God's name I was to do it justice, I looked out of my attic window. The trees stood dark across the road; the river lay dark beyond the trees; but the light of the stars was not the only light. On the horizon, behind some trees and a house, glowing, reddening, rolling, there was a Fire.

There may be people who, when they see Fire in the distance, say, 'Oh, what a pity! I hope the Insurance Company will not suffer heavily'; or, 'What a waste of material!' There may be people who say, 'There is a Fire'—and then go to bed. There may even be people who say, 'Well, what if there is a Fire?'—and turn grumpily to resume their discussion about the ethics of Palaeontology or the Finances of a Co-operative Kitchen. If such people exist, I am not among them.

When I saw this Fire I ran downstairs as hard as I could pelt and knocked up a neighbour. I said to him, 'There is a Fire. Look!' He answered, 'By Jove! so there is.' I said, 'It may be twenty miles away or two miles away. The farther the bigger. If it is a long walk the compensation is proportionate.' He said, 'Wait a minute till I put on my boots.' I said, 'All right; but buck up or the Fire may die down.' He hurried; and we started walking. We did not know whither we were walking. All we knew was, and this thought slightly depressed us, that the direction of the Fire put out of the question any hope that it was the Albert Memorial or the Queen Victoria Memorial that was in process of combustion.

We walked along the river, past the terrace and the cocoa-butter factory, and the nuns' school, and the creek, and the boathouses. The glare increased steadily as we went. When we reached the bridge it was in full view. An enormous factory was blazing away on the edge of the river below the bridge; the great span cut dark across the flames and the glow. As we climbed to the bridge we saw that there was a thin row of silent people leaning over the ironwork—looking at the Fire. The stars were above them and the velvet dark sky; the river flowed below them; a few hundred yards away great flames and interwolved clouds of smoke poured out of a huge building, the top windows of which were almost intolerably bright. The roof had gone and the pillars of stonework between the windows looked like the pillars of some ruined Greek temple against a magnificent gold sunset. It was all gold and blue; the moving gold and the still, all-embracing blue; and the crowd said nothing at all. There was no sound except

when a great stretch of masonry fell in, and then there was a swelling sigh like that which greets the ascent of a rocket at a firework display. There was a wind, and it was chill; we passed on over the bridge and descended to the tow-path on the opposite bank. Along that path we went until we were opposite the Fire. About eight people, very indistinct in the gloom, were scattered amongst the waterside bushes. In front of us a fire-boat took up its position. Below and around the Fire little lights flashed; there were lights above the river (which was at low tide); voices shouted terrifically from the other bank; voices, addressed to 'Arry, answered from the boat, and made reference to a line. An engine began working; hoses could be seen sending rising and falling sprays of water against a blaze that seemed capable of defying all the water in all the seas.

There we stood, watching. Only one sentence did we hear from our awed neighbours. There was a man who in the darkness looked portly and moustached. He took his pipe out of his mouth and said, optimistically, 'Nice breeze; it *ought* to fan it along.' 'Along' meant an enormous oil warehouse and wharf. Overhearing that remark, I told myself the truth. The moral man in me, the citizen, the patriot, were all fighting hard for supremacy. I was trying to say to myself: 'This may mean ruin to somebody; you ought to pray that it should be got under at once'; and 'How can you bear to see so much painfully-won material wastefully consumed?' and 'This stuff would probably be useful to mankind; it has employed labour; its loss may be serious; its replacement may be difficult.' But all that company of virtuous selves fought a losing battle. Aloud or in quietness I (or they) could say all this and much more; but

the still, small voice kept on repeating, 'Don't you be a humbug. It's no good. You *want* this Fire to spread. You want to forget what it all means. You will be disappointed if the firemen get it under. You would like to see the next place catch fire, and the next place, and the next place, for it would be a devil of a great display.' Peccavi; that was certainly so.

They got it under. They cornered it. Flames gave way to a great smoke; the smoke grew and grew; the path and the bushes faded from red into the indistinct hue of the starlit night. The mental glow died down; we felt cold, and moved, and walked towards home. And as we walked I meditated on the glory of Fire, fit subject for a poet, refreshment for the human spirit and exaltation for the soul. My emotions, when looking at it, had not been entirely base; I had felt, not merely a sensuous pleasure in the glories of that golden eruption under the blue roof of night, but wonder at the energies we keep under, their perpetuity and their source, and the grandeur of man, living amid so much vastness and power, valiantly struggling to cope with things greater than himself, save that they have no souls. And I thought that in the perfect and hygienic State where the firemen would find water, water, everywhere, where the Super-hose would be in use, where everything would be built of fireproof materials, and where extinguishers of a capacity not conceived by us would be available as a last resort, the wise sovereign would set apart beautiful large buildings, all made of timber, filled with oil, tar, and sugar, surrounded with waste land and fronted by a wide reflecting river, which would periodically be set on fire for the consolation and the uplifting of men. I don't want a big Fire made impossible.

And I wondered why it was that fire on a huge scale had never yet adequately inspired a poet. And then I thought that poets had, after all, done as yet very little, considering the materials that are daily displayed before them; and then I found great comfort and courage in the thought that the commonplace things, the things we all see and know, live by and live with, have so far merely been skirted, and that the provinces which remain to be explored and described and celebrated by imaginative writers are endless, and that only corners have as yet been spied into.

LYTTON STRACHEY

The Sad Story of Dr. Colbatch

From PORTRAITS IN MINIATURE

THE REV. DR. COLBATCH could not put up with it any more. Animated by the highest motives, he felt that he must intervene. The task was arduous, odious, dangerous; his antagonist most redoubtable; but Dr. Colbatch was a Doctor of Divinity, Professor of Casuistry in the University of Cambridge, a Senior Fellow of Trinity College, and his duty was plain; the conduct of the Master could be tolerated no longer; Dr. Bentley must go.

In the early years of the eighteenth century the life of learning was agitated, violent, and full of extremes. Everything about it was on the grand scale. Erudition was gigantic, controversies were frenzied, careers were punctuated by brutal triumphs, wild temerities, and dreadful mortifications. One sat, bent nearly double, surrounded by four circles of folios, living to edit Hesychius and confound Dr. Hody, and dying at last with a stomach half-full of sand. The very names of the scholars of those days had something about them at once terrifying and preposterous: there was Graevius, there was Wolfius, there was Cruquius; there were Torrentius and Rutgersius; there was the gloomy Baron de Stosch, and there was the deplorable De Pauw. But Richard Bentley was greater than all these. Combining extraordinary knowledge and almost infinite memory with an acumen hardly to be distinguished from inspiration, and a command of logical precision which might

have been envied by mathematicians or generals in the field, he revived with his daemonic energy the whole domain of classical scholarship. The peer of the mightiest of his predecessors—of Scaliger, of Casaubon—turning, in skilful strength, the magic glass of science, he brought into focus the world's comprehension of ancient literature with a luminous exactitude of which they had never dreamed. His prowess had first declared itself in his *Dissertation upon the Epistles of Phalaris*, in which he had obliterated under cartloads of erudition and ridicule the miserable Mr. Boyle. He had been rewarded, in the year 1700, when he was not yet forty, with the Mastership of Trinity; and then another side of his genius had appeared. It became evident that he was not merely a scholar, that he was a man of action and affairs, and that he intended to dominate over the magnificent foundation of Trinity with a command as absolute as that which he exercised over questions in Greek grammar. He had immediately gathered into his own hands the entire control of the College; he had manipulated the statutes, rearranged the finances, packed the Council; he had compelled the Society to rebuild and redecorate, at great expense, his own Lodge; he had brought every kind of appointment—scholarships, fellowships, livings—to depend simply upon his will. The Fellows murmured and protested in vain; their terrible tyrant treated them with scant ceremony. 'You will die in your shoes!' he had shouted at one tottering Senior who had ventured to oppose him; and another fat and angry old gentleman he had named 'The College Dog'. In fact, he treated his opponents as if they had been corrupt readings in an old manuscript. At last there was open war. The leading Fellows had appealed to the Visitor of the College, the

Bishop of Ely, to remove the Master; and the Master had replied by denying the Bishop's competence and declaring that the visitatorial power lay with the Crown. His subtle mind had detected an ambiguity in the Charter; the legal position was, indeed, highly dubious; and for five years, amid indescribable animosities, he was able to hold his enemies at bay. In the meantime, he had not been idle in other directions: he had annihilated Le Clerc, who, ignorant of Greek, was rash enough to publish a Menander; he had produced a monumental edition of Horace; and he had pulverized Free thinking in the person of Anthony Collins. But his foes had pressed upon him; and eventually it had seemed that his hour was come. In 1714 he had been forced to appear before the Bishop's court; his defence had been weak; the Bishop had drawn up a judgment of deprivation. Then there had been a *coup de théâtre*. The Bishop had suddenly died before delivering judgment. All the previous proceedings lapsed, and Bentley ruled once more supreme in Trinity.

It was at this point that the Rev. Dr. Colbatch, animated by the highest motives, felt that he must intervene. Hitherto he had filled the rôle of a peacemaker; but now the outrageous proceedings of the triumphant Master—who, in the flush of victory, was beginning to expel hostile Fellows by force from the College, and had even refused to appoint Dr. Colbatch himself to the Vice-Mastership—called aloud for the resistance of every right-thinking man. And Dr. Colbatch flattered himself that he could resist to some purpose. He had devoted his life to the study of the law; he was a man of the world; he was acquainted with Lord Carteret; and he had written a book on Portugal. Accordingly, he hurried

to London and interviewed great personages, who were all of them extremely sympathetic and polite; then he returned to Trinity, and, after delivering a fulminating sermon in the chapel, he bearded the Master at a College meeting, and actually had the nerve to answer him back. Just then, moreover, the tide seemed to be turning against the tyrant. Bentley, not content with the battle in his own College, had begun a campaign against the University. There was a hectic struggle, and then the Vice-Chancellor, by an unparalleled exercise of power, deprived Bentley of his degrees: the Master of Trinity College and the Regius Professor of Divinity was reduced to the status of an undergraduate. This delighted the heart of Dr. Colbatch. He flew to London, where Lord Carteret, as usual, was all smiles and agreement. When, a little later, the College living of Orewell fell vacant, Dr. Colbatch gave a signal proof of his power; for Bentley, after refusing to appoint him to the living, at last found himself obliged to give way. Dr. Colbatch entered the rectory in triumph; was it not clear that that villain at the Lodge was a sinking man? But, whether sinking or no, the villain could still use a pen to some purpose. In a pamphlet on a proposed edition of the New Testament, Bentley took occasion to fall upon Dr. Colbatch tooth and nail. The rector of Orewell was 'a casuistic drudge', a 'plodding pupil of Escobar', an insect, a snarling dog, a gnawing rat, a maggot, and a cabbage-head. His intellect was as dark as his countenance; his 'eyes, muscles, and shoulders were wrought up into the most solemn posture of gravity'; he grinned horribly; he was probably mad; and his brother's beard was ludicrously long.

On this Dr. Colbatch, chattering with rage, brought

an action against the Master for libel in the Court of the Vice-Chancellor. By a cunning legal device Bentley arranged that the action should be stopped by the Court of King's Bench. Was it possible that Dr. Colbatch's knowledge of the law was not impeccable? He could not believe it, and forthwith composed a pamphlet entitled *Jus Academicum*, in which the whole case, in all its bearings, was laid before the public. The language of the pamphlet was temperate, the references to Bentley were not indecently severe; but, unfortunately, in one or two passages some expressions seemed to reflect upon the competence of the Court of King's Bench. The terrible Master saw his opportunity. He moved the Court of King's Bench to take cognizance of the *Jus Academicum* as a contempt of their jurisdiction. A cold shiver ran down Dr. Colbatch's spine. Was it conceivable? . . . But no! He had friends in London, powerful friends, who would never desert him. He rushed to Downing Street; Lord Townshend was reassuring; so was the Lord Chief Justice; and so was the Lord Chancellor. 'Here,' said Lord Carteret, waving a pen, 'is the magician's wand that will always come to the rescue of Dr. Colbatch.' Surely all was well. Nevertheless, he was summoned to appear before the Court of King's Bench in order to explain his pamphlet. The judge was old and testy; he misquoted Horace—'*Jura negat sibi nata, nihil non abrogat*'; '*Arrogat*, my lord!' said Dr. Colbatch. A little later the judge once more returned to the question, making the same error. '*Arrogat*, my lord!' cried Dr. Colbatch for the second time. Yet once again, in the course of his summing-up, the judge pronounced the word '*abrogat*'; '*Arrogat*, my lord!' screamed Dr. Colbatch for the third time. The interruption was fatal.

The unhappy man was fined £50 and imprisoned for a week.

A less pertinacious spirit would have collapsed under such a dire misadventure; but Dr. Colbatch fought on. For ten years more, still animated by the highest motives, he struggled to dispossess the Master. Something was gained when yet another Bishop was appointed to the See of Ely—a Bishop who disapproved of Bentley's proceedings. With indefatigable zeal Dr. Colbatch laid the case before the Bishop of London, implored the Dean and Chapter of Westminster to interfere, and petitioned the Privy Council. In 1729 the Bishop of Ely summoned Bentley to appear before him; whereupon Bentley appealed to the Crown to decide who was the Visitor of Trinity College. For a moment Dr. Colbatch dreamed of obtaining a special Act of Parliament to deal with his enemy; but even he shrank from such a desperate expedient; and at length, in 1732, the whole case came up for decision before the House of Lords. At that very moment Bentley published his edition of *Paradise Lost*, in which all the best passages were emended and rewritten—a book remarkable as a wild aberration of genius, and no less remarkable as containing, for the first time in print, 'tow'ring o'er the alphabet like Saul', the great Digamma. If Bentley's object had been to impress his judges in his favour, he failed; for the House of Lords decided that the Bishop of Ely was the Visitor. Once more Bentley was summoned to Ely House. Dr. Colbatch was on tenterhooks; the blow was about to fall; nothing could avert it now, unless—he trembled—if the Bishop were to die again? But the Bishop did not die; in 1734 he pronounced judgement; he deposed Bentley.

So, after thirty years, a righteous doom had fallen upon that proud and wicked man. Dr. Colbatch's exultation was inordinate: it was only equalled, in fact, by his subsequent horror, indignation, and fury. For Bentley had discovered in the Statutes of the College a clause which laid it down that, when the Master was to be removed, the necessary steps were to be taken by the Vice-Master. Now the Vice-Master was Bentley's creature; he never took the necessary steps; and Bentley never ceased, so long as he lived, to be Master of Trinity. Dr. Colbatch petitioned the House of Lords, he applied to the Court of King's Bench, he beseeched Lord Carteret—all in vain. His head turned; he was old, haggard, dying. Tossing on his bed at Orewell, he fell into a delirium; at first his mutterings were inarticulate; but suddenly, starting up, a glare in his eye, he exclaimed, with a strange emphasis, to the utter bewilderment of the bystanders, '*Arrogat*, my lord!' and immediately expired.

SIR W. BEACH THOMAS

Birds at their Best

From 'THE OBSERVER'

HERE and there it is still vouchsafed us in England to see the greater birds dominate a whole landscape, as a golden eagle may in Scotland, or an albatros in the Pacific. They assume a masterful importance. You cannot but watch them; and it is pleasure enough to lie on a bank and direct your glass along the line of their passages from feeding-ground to nest, or whither they will. Of these greater birds, one of the rarest and most powerful, the Marsh Harrier, has of late years returned to haunts where he flourished in the time of Hereward the Wake; and we may expect that his return is for always, so far as we may use such immortal phrases. The bird can make the scenery like a great tree.

How intense is the zeal to restore these birds to their old homes one recent incident may indicate. Not far from a Norfolk sanctuary, reserved 'in perpetuity', is a great area of marsh land that recently came into the market. The news came to the ears of a denizen of this wild and wonderful county; but he had no time so much as to study the bounds of the property. He drove to a mill which gave a bird's-eye view of the scene, and said, 'If you say the Marsh Harrier breeds there, that is good enough for me.' And he bought. People have come to regard the presence of these birds as giving honour and glory to the district like a great building or the birth-house of a famous man. When Shakespeare called England a 'swan's nest in an ocean', his praise was couched

in an idiom that a Norfolk man would appreciate. A harrier's nest in the marsh adds quality to county patriotism. How eagle-like these great birds are! As one watched from afar the hen bird dip to her nest, Shelley's great phrase fitted her not less than the Promethean eagle: she too hovered a moment 'in the light of her golden wings'.

Some of us came to this half-dry sedgy marsh after a morning in what must be the snuggest, neatest, quietest sanctuary within Europe; and the two gave a memorable picture of England at its best. Most East Anglian Broads have a waterway through them; and at holiday seasons you are much more certain to hear the scream of mountebank music from a gramophone than the boom of the bittern or the drum of the snipe, or the liquid bubble of the redshank. The sanctuary is to some extent outraged by the passers-by, even if they do no direct damage and trespass only in spirit. Alderfen is distinctive in this, that it is 'involved in its own virtue'. Nature herself has placarded 'No thoroughfare'. No navigable stream passes through it; nor does any road, other than a green, lead up to its cloisters. It is as hard to find as the centre of a maze. When you are once afloat on its waters you inhabit another world.

And Alderfen possesses all that a sanctuary needs: an almost dry marsh, to-day as white with patches of cotton grass as any meadow with moon-daisies. The open waters are hardly less white with water lilies, mostly singularly large in flower and broad in leaf. The islanded lake is ringed with alders and hedge plants, where the warblers flourish. The 'thick chattered cheeps' of the sedge warbler were as continuous as the wild cries of the gulls.

Alderfen is one of the rare places where the black-headed gulls—the species familiar to all Londoners—nest; and the place is so congenial in its quiet that they have neglected their usual habits for its sake. They nest here like moorhens on little islands in the water. And the pairs are faithful to the same home year after year, as may be proved by one example. The first nest I saw contained three eggs, of which one was blue, in queer contrast with the dull browns of the other two; and the one constant guardian of the Fen, who performs a labour of love, has observed this same peculiarity for a number of years. Other eggs had just hatched. One of the chicks, when we first saw it, swam to a lily leaf, with the ambition to mount it, scratching at the edge like a dog up a bank. The leaf was not a quarter-inch above the water, but that was a great height, needing no little determination and athletic prowess to surmount. After many failures—and ‘what are our failures here, but a triumph’s evidence!’—the feat was accomplished, and the callow chick stood proudly erect on the very middle of the lily-raft, which gave no evidence at all of the extra weight.

Such little scenes have the power to impart a pleasure that abides for years. The harrier over the marsh and the gull on the lily leaf belonged to the same rich day. Another picture, not less impressive, was harvested that same month in a more private sanctuary. A brook divides it, flowing under the dark roof of a sycamore, a spacious tree that carries more surface of leaf than any in our English list, and half under a number of red-barked willows with narrow leaves as silvery as the little fish below them. It is a haunt on summer eves of midget

and gnat, and for some reason beyond my ken, of the many strange March, April, May, and June flies that emerge from the waters. You would often think that some substance, maple syrup from the leaves or bits of flower or bract, were continually dropping from the boughs. Or the repetition of rings on the water, wide-spaced but almost continuous, suggest the opening of a summer shower. But the fish, mostly silver dace, are the only cause: they collect in shoals to the shade of the sycamore, for it is their richest feeding-ground. We presumed that the swallows assembled for much the same reason as the fish: they, too, had an evening rise. In the hot daytime they danced their merry round close over the satin sheen of the hayfield. In the hours after sunset, when the air seems to hold the glow of the sun just as it holds its warmth, the swallows, whose form of rest is endless movement, left the field for the brown stream. The passage of their flight so dwells on the eye you could half-believe its lines remained in a dim tracery in the air itself. You could look down on their blue wings and backs as they flew under the little bridge till, half mesmerized by looking, you saw the surface of the water through a film of flight-patterns. Looking upwards from such a scene one odorous evening of late June, we saw one of the swallows play a strange antic. She rose from near the water-level at as sharp an angle as a tree-pipet or a ringdove practising its spring song or flight, fluttered for a brief second opposite the twig of a willow, and without further delay vanished into the darkening air. It happened that a moment earlier this same willow-twigg, rather barer than its neighbours and more directly horizontal, had caught our attention. In lieu of leaves it was decorated with five young swallows,

four of them rubbing shoulders, and the fifth, rather larger and more fully coloured than the rest, perched at the remove of an inch or so. The old church clock had struck nine some while ago, and the light even beyond the shade of the sycamore was vague and dim. Exactly how the mother in that momentary flutter and check managed to pass the food to the young it was not easy to determine; but we could see that at each return, after two or three minutes' hunting, she fed a different babe, though without apparent method.

One of the most precious sights in our natural history is the feeding of the hen Montagu Harrier. She rises from her nest when her mate calls to announce his approach, and takes the food almost from his mouth in mid-air. The proudest man I ever met was a great naturalist, who had seen a pair of the yet rarer Marsh Harriers make the same manœuvre. Yet the swallow's feeding of her young, if we may compare the little with the big, is as wonderful. The babes were delicately poised on a slight and swaying twig, but took the food without the flutter of a wing, or any further movement than the opening of the beak. Nor was there any of the clamouring one sees among young in the nest. And young swallows can clamour as greedily as the best. I have watched the feeding in the nest, not seldom. There the old bird clings for an appreciable time to the mud, and usually chooses the same corner. The fed youngster collapses, and another shoves into place. So the selection is automatically made. This feeding was of a very different sort. It ceased about half-past nine, and the young seemed to shrink in size as their heads sank into their shoulders, and they fell fast enough asleep to allow you to go and see them at the closest quarters. They

seemed as secure on their precarious perch as if they had grown there, like the native leaves of the tree. The experience was not repeated. Next dawn the birds went from the dark 'into the world of light', and did not return.

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know
At first sight, if the bird be flown;
But what fair well or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

The young must have been able to fly well, or they could not have perched there, far from their nest, and perhaps like a statesman of recent fame they wooed sleep by a nightly change of roosting place. The swallows feed their young in every sort of place, in the nest from a standstill, on the twig from a hovering flutter, and on the wing when both poise and check their flight. One pair may rear three broods, even, on occasion, four within our short summer. If all are to be fit and strong for the three thousand miles of flight that are coming, they must be strengthened intensively against this laborious autumn. So their young are fed later than most other birds, and at least as early. Even the royster-ing bumble-bees had gone to ground while the family on the twig were being fed. The bats were out, and the orange disk of the moon took up the task of the sun before the mother swallow left her family to their sleep.

The Street

From 'THE TIMES', 22 Dec. 1933

REFERENCE was made in these columns yesterday to a paper by Mr. Frank Pick in the *Architectural Review* on the subject of the street. He was quoted as saying ('rather unexpectedly' for a former managing director of the Underground and a present member of the London Passenger Transport Board) that a street was not primarily meant for traffic. He goes farther than that. It is to him a 'harmful and tragic fact' that first the services, such as water and gas, and then the traffic on wheels have so mastered the streets that the whole conception of a street has changed. A street has become first of all a means for the movement of wheeled traffic. It has been a long process. Nearly four centuries ago the dwellers in Blackfriars were hot against the lumbering coaches of the great, which came and blocked the narrow streets of the precinct within which these lines are now being written; and the Wren exhibition at St. Paul's showed how his plan for a new London after the Fire included at least one 'arterial' road to take the heavy through-traffic out of streets not meant for such use. A street, says Mr. Pick, in words that deserve to be repeated, is not a traffic route. It is 'a place for gossip, for loitering, for exchange, for trade, for recreation. It is for the city-dweller a place to live in'; and the arcades of Covent Garden in Queen Anne's day, the Pantiles of Tunbridge Wells, Dr. Johnson's Fleet Street, the High Streets of a 'Cranford', of a 'Troy Town', and a hundred other places would bear him out. Within living memory

people used to stroll, or 'slope', about in Bond Street, meeting their friends, chatting on the pavement. Bond Street was a street then. Any one who tried it to-day would soon be 'larned to be a pedestrian'. For Bond Street is a street no longer. It is a passage leading from packed Piccadilly to still more crowded Oxford Street.

Mr. Pick's main subject was the effect of this misuse on the look of our streets, and the sloppiness, meanness, ostentation which result from it. But his vision of the street as a place for the city dweller to live in is one that needs cherishing and asserting. And it makes a pleasant excuse for wandering in thought awhile among streets which are streets indeed. Best of all in that kind are the bazaars in India, or the streets of the *souk* in any Arab town. There is not a wheel in the place. The street is full of people on foot, not rushing to get anywhere but strolling so gently that the donkeys nose their way through a mass that seems, like water, neither to resist nor to yield. In the open shop-fronts men not only sell their goods; they make them. The metal worker inlays his wires, the saddler stitches his crimson velvet or scarlet leather, the potter, squatting to his job, is busy with both hands and one very cramped-looking foot. The nearest thing that England can show to that is the Rows in Chester, where there are no wheels and no hurry; and the Rows have something also of the nature of the arcades in Pisa or in Padua, which, gratefully cool and dim for loitering, can show even in this informal age something of the sort of life for which our own Covent Garden was built.

Then the vision changes to a very wide street, in Southern Spain, or in some island of the Mediterranean; a street so wide that all down the middle there is a long

garden, with fountains playing and statues gleaming. Every now and then a motor-car will go by; but there are very few wheels, because at the upper end there is no outlet, and no one can go scurrying through to get somewhere else. Or it may be, as with the Alameda of Santiago in Chile, that roadways and gardens are so wide that even through-traffic seems insignificant. These are a few of the sorts of street which are still felt to be not passages nor tubes, but places—places in which the inhabitants have a right to live as much of their common life as they please, places with their own character and beauty to be leisurely enjoyed. Certain photographs recently published seem to show that by-passing has spared some few village streets for their proper purpose; but it seems all but impossible now to save for London or other towns the old urban life of the street.

H. M. TOMLINSON

Beauty and the Beast

From OUT OF SOUNDINGS

A NIGHT or two ago I was persuaded to a first experience of the Talkies. It was explained to me that life is incomplete for one who has failed to watch a photographic story accompanied by appropriate words from a talking machine. Wonderful invention! It is a measure of our advance to higher and richer perceptions.

I confess I was reluctant to go. I do not remember that twenty years ago we were at all excited by the 'talkies'; they were not wonderful then, but common to the week, and it was usual to attend them, for entertainment. Not so long since, when our Victorian souls desired light refreshment, we inclined to this or that music-hall, and we went to hear Marie Lloyd or Yvette Guilbert talk to us. Good talk it was, too.

Though not good enough for to-day, so we are told. We are assured it would not be good enough to-day. We have changed. There was a time, too, when we enjoyed witnessing a favourite conductor evoke from his instrumentalists Beethoven in a symphony; and then, in a dream, we could see that the timbalist, a vague presiding figure high above the rest of the orchestra, was Zeus himself, leisurely beating a measure for the spheres. That respectful silence of the witnesses at the end of it, that brief pause when only the echoes of the music were sounding in one's mind, that was something, too; for we do not applaud on the instant what is noble, as though it were a trick by a conjuror. We do not applaud because

there is no surprise; there is but wonder. Our faith has always been that man, at rare intervals, may rise to such a height, and when he does so we are not surprised, but silenced.

Yet you cannot, by 'wireless', see Zeus above measuring his thunder and flashes to the music. The radio set, that static little box of tricks we substitute for a musician evoking from a concert of artists the triumph of a master, is impersonal. Not by its aid did shepherds, one night, while watching their flocks, delude themselves with the wild notion that the stars had good tidings for them. Let us agree that the little box will do what the amateur at the piano could never do. Our ration of music, good and bad, now comes in from the main like our supply of water. We turn a button, and it is there. Nor has anything to be done for it; it is as certain as the income-tax. It also enlarges, on occasion, the voices of kings, premiers, and presidents. When they desire an urgent word with us they have a means to hand which the angels did not use because it was not there. They have that advantage over the angels. That new ability of the great and important to communicate directly with us is a bond between them and the humble. The King speaks in the kitchen. It is very agreeable for a household to be advised by the august voice of the Premier. Still, though while we sit at our fireside, listening-in after supper, flattered to hear a Chief of State assure us that so far the likelihood of war next morning need not keep us awake, we certainly know that St. Michael, if ever he overcame the incoherence of the atmosphere, would not have an earthly chance. St. Michael cannot compete with a Chancellor of the Exchequer. If he tried to get a word through to us we should recognize at once an

improper interruption; for we know well enough, we know it instinctively and sorrowfully, that the message he had for us would not come that way; it would be a personal word.

* * * * *

I went to the Talkies. . . .

It was my first and last. . . . Here was this new great palace, and a new age, and the Talkies. Now we are separate in heart, though our bodies are herded; not Londoners, Cockneys no more; we are the mob, through the irresistible magic of another machine. Science assembles us, Art does not unite us. Influences that in a new jargon are called mergers and syndicates have deprived us of contact with the artist. We gape, and hardly know why, at a distant and bloodless wonder. We have grown distrustful of what is within ourselves; for that, we have learned, is no longer of importance. Space and science insulate us from the sympathy of humane communication. And there is no compensation for our loss. Our ways of life, under the compulsion of mechanical powers with which it would be useless to argue—they have no heads, as kings had, to be cut off—are shaping us into flocks with the same faces, the same wool, and the same desires. Our heads instinctively turn in one direction. We are losing our personal oddities and characteristics, for these are of no use, and are even dangerous to flockmasters. It is becoming hard to tell one sheep from another. We read the same newspapers, are prompted by the same loud-speakers, dance to the same music, and stampede before decisions not our own. There may be more than we think in that myth of the Gorgon's head; but instead of into stone its modern victims are changed into mutton.

G. M. TREVELYAN

Walking

From CLIO, A MUSE AND OTHER ESSAYS

I HAVE two doctors, my left leg and my right. When body and mind are out of gear (and those twin parts of me live at such close quarters that the one always catches melancholy from the other) I know that I have only to call in my doctors and I shall be well again.

Mr. Arnold Bennett has written a religious tract called *The Human Machine*. Philosophers and clergymen are always discussing why we should be good—as if any one doubted that he ought to be. But Mr. Bennett has tackled the real problem of ethics and religion—how we can make ourselves be good. We all of us know that we ought to be cheerful to ourselves and kind to others, but cheerfulness is often and kindness sometimes as unattainable as sleep in a white night. That combination of mind and body which I call my soul is often so choked up with bad thoughts or useless worries that

Books and my food, and summer rain,
Knock on my sullen heart in vain.

It is then that I call in my two doctors to carry me off for the day.

* * * * *

Nursery lore tells us that 'Charles I walked and talked: half-an-hour after his head was cut off'. Mr. Sidgwick¹ evidently thinks that it was a case not merely of *post hoc* but *propter hoc*, an example of summary but just punish-

¹ A. H. Sidgwick, *Walking Essays*.

ment. Yet, if I read Cromwell aright, he no less than his royal victim would have talked as he walked. And Cromwell reminds me of Carlyle, who carried the art of 'walking and talking' to perfection as one of the highest of human functions. Who does not remember his description of 'the sunny summer afternoon' when he and Irving 'walked and talked a good sixteen miles'? Those who have gone walks with Carlyle tell us that then most of all the fire kindled. And because he talked well when he walked with others, he felt and thought all the more when he walked alone, 'given up to his bits of reflection in the silence of the moors and hills'. He was alone when he walked his fifty-four miles in the day, from Muirkirk to Dumfries, 'the longest walk I ever made', he tells us. Carlyle is in every sense a patron saint of Walking, and his vote is emphatically given *not* for the 'gospel of silence'!

* * * * *

There are many schools of Walking and none of them orthodox. One school is that of the road-walkers, the Puritans of the religion. A strain of fine ascetic rigour is in these men, yet they number among them at least two poets. Stevenson is *par excellence* their bard:

'Boldly he sings, to the merry tune he marches.'

* * * * *

To my thinking, the road-walkers have grasped one part of the truth. The road is invaluable for pace and swing, and the ideal walk permits or even requires a smooth surface for some considerable portion of the way. On other terms it is hard to cover a respectable distance, and the change of tactile values underfoot is agreeable.

But more than that I will not concede: twenty-five or thirty miles of moor and mountain, of wood and field-

path, is better in every way than five-and-thirty, or even forty, hammered out on the road. Early in life, no doubt, a man will test himself at pace Walking, and then of course the road must be kept. Every aspiring Cantab and Oxonian ought to walk to the Marble Arch at a pace that will do credit to the college whence he starts at break of day:¹ the wisdom of our ancestors, surely not by an accident, fixed those two seats of learning each at the same distance from London, and at exactly the right distance for a test walk. And there is a harder test than that: if a man can walk the eighty miles from St. Mary Oxon to St. Mary Cantab in the twenty-four hours, he wins his place with Bowen and a very few more.

But it is a great mistake to apply the rules of such test Walking on roads to the case of ordinary Walking. The secret beauties of nature are unveiled only to the cross-country walker. Pan would not have appeared to Pheidippides on a road. On the road we never meet the 'moving accidents by flood and field': the sudden glory of a woodland glade; the open back-door of the old farm-house sequestered deep in rural solitude; the cow routed up from meditation behind the stone wall as we scale it suddenly; the deep, slow, south-country stream that we must jump, or wander along to find the bridge; the northern torrent of molten peat-hag that we must ford up to the waist, to scramble, glowing warm-cold, up the farther foxglove bank; the autumnal dew on the bracken and the blue straight smoke of the cottage in the still glen at dawn; the rush down the mountain-side, hair flying, stones and grouse rising at our feet; and at

¹ Start at five from Cambridge, and have a second breakfast ordered beforehand at Royston to be ready at eight.

the bottom the plunge in the pool below the waterfall, in a place so fair that kings should come from far to bathe therein—yet is it left, year in year out, unvisited save by us and ‘troops of stars’. These, and a thousand other blessed chances of the day, are the heart of Walking, and these are not of the road.

Yet the hard road plays a part in every good walk, generally at the beginning and at the end. Nor must we forget the ‘soft’ road, mediating as it were between his hard artificial brother and wild surrounding nature. The broad grass lanes of the low country, relics of medieval wayfaring; the green, unfenced moorland road; the derelict road already half gone back to pasture; the common farm track—these and all their kind are a blessing to the walker, to be diligently sought out by help of map¹ and used as long as may be. For they unite the speed and smooth surface of the harder road with much at least of the softness to the foot, the romance and the beauty of cross-country routes.

It is well to seek as much variety as is possible in twelve hours. Road and track, field and wood, mountain, hill, and plain should follow each other in shifting vision. The finest poem on the effect of variation in the day’s walk is George Meredith’s *The Orchard and the Heath*. Some kinds of country are in themselves a combination of different delights, as for example the sub-Lake district, which walkers often see in Pisgah view from Bowfell or the Old Man, but too seldom traverse. It is a land sounding with streams from the higher mountains, itself composed of little hills and tiny plains

¹ Compass and coloured half-inch Bartholomew is the walker’s *vade mecum* in the north; the one-inch ordnance is more desirable for the more enclosed and less hilly south of England.

covered half by hazel woods and heather moors, half by pasture and cornfields; and in the middle of the fields rise lesser islands of rocks and patches of the northern jungle still uncleared. The districts along the foot of mountain ranges are often the most varied in feature, and therefore the best for Walking.

Variety, too, can be obtained by losing the way—a half-conscious process, which in a sense can no more be done of deliberate purpose than falling in love. And yet a man can sometimes very wisely let himself drift, either into love or into the wrong path out walking. There is a joyous mystery in roaming on, reckless where you are, into what valley, road, or farm chance and the hour is guiding you. If the place is lonely and beautiful, and if you have lost all count of it upon the map, it may seem a fairy glen, a lost piece of old England that no surveyor would find though he searched for it a year. I scarcely know whether most to value this quality of aloofness and magic in country I have never seen before, and may never see again, or the familiar joys of Walking grounds where every tree and rock are rooted in the memories that make up my life.

* * * * *

If the walker seeks variety of bodily motion, other than the run down hill, let him scramble. Scrambling is an integral part of Walking, when the high ground is kept all day in a mountain region. To know and love the texture of rocks we should cling to them; and when mountain-ash or holly, or even the gnarled heather root, has helped us at a pinch, we are thenceforth on terms of affection with all their kind. No one knows how sun and water can make a steep bank of moss smell all ambrosia till he has dug foot, fingers, and face into it in earnest.

And you must learn to haul yourself up a rock before you can visit those fern-clad inmost secret places where the Spirit of the Gully dwells.

* * * * *

Then is the best yet to come, when the walk is carried on into the night, or into the long, silent, twilight hours which in the northern summer stand in night's place. Whether I am alone or with one fit companion, then most is the quiet soul awake; for then the body, drugged with sheer health, is felt only as a part of the physical nature that surrounds it and to which it is indeed akin; while the mind's sole function is to be conscious of calm delight. Such hours are described in Meredith's *Night-Walk*:

'A pride of legs in motion kept
Our spirits to their task meanwhile,
And what was deepest dreaming slept:
The posts that named the swallowed mile;
Beside the straight canal the hut
Abandoned; near the river's source
Its infant chirp; the shortest cut;
The roadway missed; were our discourse;
At times dear poets, whom some view
Transcendent or subdued evoked.' . . .
But most the silences were sweet!

Indeed the only reason, other than weakness of the flesh, for not always walking until late at night, is the joy of making a leisurely occupation of the hamlet that chance or whim has selected for the night's rest. There is much merit in the stroll after supper, hanging contemplative at sunset over the little bridge, feeling at one equally with the geese there on the common and with the high gods at rest on Olympus. After a day's walk

everything has twice its usual value. Food and drink become subjects for epic celebration, worthy of the treatment Homer gave them. Greed is sanctified by hunger and health. And as with food, so with books. Never start on a walking-tour without an author whom you love. It is criminal folly to waste your too rare hours of perfect receptiveness on the magazines that you may find cumbering the inn. No one, indeed, wants to read much after a long walk; but for a few minutes, at supper or after it, you may be in the seventh heaven with a scene of *Henry IV*, a chapter of Carlyle, a dozen 'Nay, Sirs' of Dr. Johnson, or your own chosen novelist. Their wit and poetry acquire all the richness of your then condition, and that evening they surpass even their own gracious selves. Then, putting the volume in your pocket, go out, and godlike watch the geese.

* * * * *

George Meredith once said to me that we should 'love all changes of weather'. That is a true word for walkers. Change in weather should be made as welcome as change in scenery. 'Thrice blessed is our sunshine after rain.' I love the stillness of dawn, and of noon, and of evening, but I love no less the 'winds austere and pure'. The fight against fiercer wind and snowstorm is among the higher joys of Walking, and produces in shortest time the state of ecstasy. Meredith himself has described once for all in *The Egoist* the delight of Walking soaked through by rain. Still more, in mist upon the mountains to keep the way, or to lose and find it, is one of the great primeval games, though now we play it with map and compass. But do not, in mountain mist, 'lose the way' on purpose, as I have recommended to vary the monotony of less exciting walks. I once had eight days' walk-

ing alone in the Pyrenees, and on only one half-day saw heaven or earth. Yet I enjoyed that week in the mist, for I was kept hard at work finding the unseen way through pine forest and gurgling alp, every bit of instinct and hill knowledge on the stretch. And that one half-day of sunlight, how I treasured it! When we see the mists sweeping up to play with us as we walk the mountain crests we should 'rejoice', as it was the custom of Cromwell's soldiers to do when they saw the enemy. Listen while you can to the roar of waters from behind the great grey curtain, and look at the torrent at your feet tumbling the rocks down gully and glen, for there will be no such sights and sounds when the mists are withdrawn into their lairs, and the mountain, no longer a giant half seen through clefts of scudding cloud, stands there, from scree-foot to cairn, dwarfed and betrayed by the sun. So let us 'love all changes of weather'.

I have now set down my own experiences and likings. Let no one be alarmed or angry because his ideas of Walking are different. There is no orthodoxy in Walking. It is a land of many paths and no-paths, where every one goes his own way and is right.

HELEN WADDELL

The Hyacinth Fields

From 'THE NATION', 12 Jan. 1918

IT was some time in the fourth century that T'ao Yüan Ming wrote the Chinese variant of that legend of the Before Time, which the world has been telling itself since the evening and the morning were the second day. It is the story of a fisherman of Wu-ling; how he one day fished farther up the river than his wont, and beyond a bend in the stream came upon a valley of peach trees in blossom; how the valley stretched far into the mountains and he followed it, and came down upon the farther side into a great and quiet land, with green fields, and young and old working in them. Their clothes were strange to him, but their words, when he spoke to them, were like his own, though of an older accent. For they were of his province, these, but had come from it many generations since, fleeing from the evil of the House of Ch'in. No trouble had since befallen them; of the rise of the Han dynasty they knew nothing, and they sorrowed with him over the chances of the world. For a long time they entertained him in their houses, and he was sorry when he had to go from them, and took many notes of the way, that he might come again. 'It will not be worth while to speak of us,' they said courteously, when he took leave of them; but he thought otherwise, acquainting no less a person than the Governor. The Governor sent officials of State to accompany him on his return, that they might report upon that happy valley; yet, though the fisherman

studied his notes ever so carefully, he was not able to bring them there. The bend in the river always eluded him; he never could find it again.

And this is fortunate: for that undiscovered bend is responsible for most literature. Greece, not a very Attic Greece, lay behind it for the Elizabethans. The eighteenth century glimpsed the Middle Ages there, and remoter reaches still, which they set out to find with the notes of that very untrustworthy fisherman, James Macpherson. Curiously, the seeker in time becomes the sought. Keats heard the Elizabethan drinking choruses come faintly down the stream. Malory followed 'the French Boke', and himself became for the nineteenth century the complete angler. Of late, the impression is that we have sufficiently fished those upper reaches; nothing less than a whole new river will content us, with the continent of Asia round the bend. There is a little initial difficulty in the matter of portages, but this the Orientalists, the scholars, do for us; draymen, very porters: behold us launched. 'Having discovered Chinese painting,' they tell us, 'we are slowly beginning to discover Chinese poetry'; and discovering Chinese poetry, will find salvation. The *Rubáiyát* has not saved us: Japanese art did not give us its liquid line: but Chinese poetry has the simple efficacy of a revelation in religion. The reed pipe is to shame us from our virtuosity; our poets are to strip off their singing robes, to sing, in fact, in their working clothes. They are not even to sing, they are to say. For Chinese poetry, 'the poetry of tomorrow', is 'more reasonable' than ours, 'nearer prose'.

Now this kind of language serves a little to rouse that part which Hassan of El Basrah has in all of us when he says, 'There is no country better than my country, and

everything in it is better than what there is in all the other countries, and its people are good people, with comely faces.' One submits that lyrics of Donne's—and heaven knows Donne was without carefulness—'happen' to us as surely as if they had been translated from the Chinese; that Po Chu-i may draw a more beguiling melody from his Chinese penny whistle than all our dexterity from the violin, yet will the violin remain the nobler instrument; and that if it comes to penny whistles, Blake was no mean performer thereon. That, to be plain with you, Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, are better than this Jordan, and we will continue washing in them. Which is to be not a little ungracious.

Foolish, also. For every bend in the river is a grateful thing to us who are for ever threatened with the canal. And the idea of the bend is surely the peculiar property of the East. The tenth of a farthing will buy it for you in the Tokio streets, all infinity in the circuit of a fan; the unseen bay between two pine-fringed headlands, the single headland beyond which lie you know not what 'fair cities and delicate sea-coasts'. All Japanese sea-coasts stretch to infinity. This, too, is the reason why so many of their fairy-tales are a little grey and mournful in their endings. For there is no finality in an unhappy ending; it postulates an eternity, in which all these sorrowful things shall be made up. There is less infinity of reach in their verse; yet one remembers *tankas*, translated by Yone Noguchi, that have the sudden depth of wells. The first of them is a mother's lament for her little son:

'The hunter of dragon flies,
To-day how far away
May he have gone!'

The second should be written in the grass character on a scroll, and hung in the low-browed inn on the Usui Pass that looks across a sea of mountains to Fuji itself—

‘Being tired,
Ah, the time I fall into the inn,
—The wistaria flowers!’

There is a world of experience between them; yet in one thing they are alike, that they have each captured the moment, blotted out past and future into the eternal Now, which is the perpetual mood of deity: certainly the test of divinity in lyric poets.

Moreover, it may well be that the untroubled upper reaches of these Chinese waters are more nearly answerable to our peculiar need. For thirty years at least we have thirsted for the cooling draught of the Augustan peace; yet one suspects that the waters of Bath and Tunbridge Wells are too medicated for the disease of our self-consciousness. The eighteenth century is not primary enough: its admirable manner is ‘that controlled self-consciousness which is the expensive substitute for simplicity’. And China, the China of Mr. Waley’s poets and Professor Giles’s biographies, is the eighteenth century, but an eighteenth century that has entered the kingdom of heaven and become as a little child. With a great sum the Augustans obtained their freedom: these were free born.

The eighteenth century was not civilized enough to be simple: they dare not obey Dryden’s ‘Trust nature: do not labour to be dull’. Chinese civilization is a thing so old that itself is a natural object,

‘Rolled round in earth’s diurnal course
With rocks and stones and trees.’

The Augustans are a little like the actors of the Elizabethan stage: magnificently habited, with a background of bare boards. The Chinese background is an immemorial setting of ceremony of State and landscape gardens. It projects itself even upon eternity. To Li Ho, having finished his term on earth, came a green man riding on a hornless dragon, and said, 'God Almighty hath finished building his Jade Pavilion, and desireth you to be his secretary.' They all enjoy 'their comfortable importances', these men of letters, the while they call themselves the Idlers of the Bamboo Brook. It is the blend of massive dignity with a sort of childlike directness in living that is their charm. Ku K'ai-chih is one of the Four Masters in Chinese art: but they remember him most happily for his way of eating sugar-cane, beginning at the wrong end, and 'passing gradually', as himself expressed it, 'into Paradise'. Life seems to have come to them naturally as that true poem which Milton—that mortal part of Milton which was so much more Augustan than Jacobean—strove so disastrously to make his own; except that Aubrey says he always had a garden where he lived. There is no imagining these Chinese *littérateurs* without their gardens: Ts'ui Li-Chih, magistrate, who spent his time reciting verses under the pine trees in his courtyard, and who, when any one came to see him, courteously replied, 'I am engaged on official business; please excuse me.' Fu Pu-Ch'i, sitting in his judgment hall and playing on the lute, while five inhabitants, more virtuous than he, administered his province: 'You put your trust in energy,' he said to a more active colleague, 'I in men; mine is the better method.' Liu Ling, to whom, peaceably drinking in his pavilion, two neighbours came to reason of temperance

and judgment; whereupon Liu Ling, having provided himself with a fresh flagon, sat down, and by alternately sipping and stroking his beard, lulled himself into that state when, as he said himself, 'eternity seems but a single day.' 'So he sat'—for Liu Ling has a pleasant habit of referring to himself as 'an elderly gentleman of my acquaintance'—'his ears were beyond the reach of thunder: he could not have seen a mountain. Heat and cold existed for him no more. He knew not even the workings of his own mind. To him the affairs of this world appeared but as so much duckweed in a river, while the two philanthropists agitated at his side like two wasps trying to convert a caterpillar.'

To come upon writing like that is to begin to understand the primary quality of the Chinese mind. One ceases to wonder that the characters of their alphabet, so much older than ours, are still young; still sketches in black and white, and each of them symbolic. Our sounds once meant something to us, and now and then a fragment of a line of Keats reminds us how many fair and fragile things begin with the letter *f*. But for the most part sounds must crowd into words, and words to sentences, and sentences to paragraphs, to take effect on our insensitiveness. So, too, with the giving of names, which is the art of painting in little. There is a score of them scattered through the 'Chinese Biographical Dictionary', and every one of them a scene upon a fan. There is the ascetic Marquis of Yeh, whom the countryside eternized as the Immortal Collarbone; Yen Ts'an, so glorious in his potations that they called him the Drunken Dragon; Hsiao Man, the Willow Wand, mistress of the poet Po Chü-i, whose beauty lingers in the wine-flagon that is her namesake, because the line of it

recalled the far-famed curve of her waist; Ch'ao Fei-yen, the Flying Swallow, seen dancing one night by the Emperor Ch'eng Ti when he wandered the streets in disguise; Han Fu, the Red Flicker, from the colour and gesture of her fan: lyrics in little; dead butterflies, staining the sober pages with the dust of their vivid wings. They still have the art of significant gesture in China. There is one story Rabelais would have loved, of the wealthy branch of the Yuan family who on the seventh day of the seventh moon spread out their fur robes and costly robes of ceremony for airing, as is the custom in China; while the Bohemian nephew living in art and poverty across the way hangs out a solitary pair of trousers, explaining to his friends that he is a victim to the tyranny of custom. They are for ever making pictures; though not all on the scale of that Emperor, lover of Pan Fei, who had lilies carved on the soles of her small shoes and the streets strewn with gold leaf when she passed, that flowers might indeed spring up behind her. There is too much composition in that picture; the true Chinese method is nearer the spirit of their own proverb — 'The peach tree and the plum tree speak not, yet around them are seen the footprints of men.' And perhaps the most characteristic story of all is of that general Liu Kun who defended Chin-Yang against the Tartars, some time in the fourth century. The city was straitly sieged and hope all but gone, when one moonlight night the general climbed the tower and there played wandering airs upon the Tartar pipe. The barbarians stood in the door of their tents and heard him, sick for home; and in the morning the plain was empty and the great hordes gone.

Even so, the reed pipe has begun to play for more

remote barbarians. And one remembers a fairy-tale that is also, since it was written in the actual eighteenth century, something of a parable: the story of a student in Peking who had finished his course, and wandered into the Temple of Mysteries, before he should go back to his home in the provinces. There he came upon a wall-painting in an unfrequented corridor, a troop of goddesses gathering hyacinths in a meadow: but one of the goddesses was younger than the rest, for her hair was still low on her neck, and looking upon her, this student loved her. He knelt before the painting for a long time, perhaps passing into a trance. For it seemed to him that the youngest of the goddesses stepped out of the wall-painting, and down the corridor and through the courtyard to her own chamber. The student followed her, and had but knelt at her feet to crave her kindness when there came a trampling of feet upon the stone. Terrified, she hid him behind a screen, and a great god in armour with a black lacquer face came through the door. He questioned, she protested; at last he went, ill-satisfied, taking the youngest of the goddesses with him. When the student came to himself he was still kneeling before the wall-painting. Yet something had happened; for the goddess with her hair low on her neck was no longer in the hyacinth meadow. 'Where is she?' he cried to a passing priest, and the priest looked upon him, kindly. 'Go home, young man,' he said. 'She is waiting for you in your own village.'

VIRGINIA WOOLF

Lord Chesterfield's Letters to His Son

From THE COMMON READER, Second Series

* * * * *

WHEN the letters begin, Philip Stanhope was a little boy of seven. And if we are to make any complaint against the father's moral teaching, it is that the standard is too high for such tender years. 'Let us return to oratory, or the art of speaking well; which should never be entirely out of our thoughts,' he writes to the boy of seven. 'A man can make no figure without it in Parliament, or the Church, or in the law,' he continues, as if the little boy were already considering his career. It seems, indeed, that the father's fault, if fault it be, is one common to distinguished men who have not themselves succeeded as they should have done and are determined to give their children—and Philip was an only child—the chances that they have lacked. Indeed, as the letters go on one may suppose that Lord Chesterfield wrote as much to amuse himself by turning over the stores of his experience, his reading, his knowledge of the world, as to instruct his son. The letters show an eagerness, an animation, which prove that to write to Philip was not a task but a delight. Tired, perhaps, with the duties of office and disillusioned with its disappointments, he takes up his pen and, in the relief of free communication at last, forgets that his correspondent is, after all, only a schoolboy who cannot understand half the things that his father says to him. But, even so, there is nothing to repel us in Lord Chesterfield's preliminary

sketch of the unknown world. He is all on the side of moderation, toleration, ratiocination. Never abuse whole bodies of people, he counsels; frequent all churches, laugh at none; inform yourself about all things. Devote your mornings to study, your evenings to good society. Dress as the best people dress, behave as they behave, never be eccentric, egotistical, or absent-minded. Observe the laws of proportion, and live every moment to the full.

So, step by step, he builds up the figure of the perfect man—the man that Philip may become, he is persuaded, if he will only—and here Lord Chesterfield lets fall the words which are to colour his teaching through and through—cultivate the Graces.

* * * * *

Certainly there is much to be said in favour of the training, however we define it, which helped Lord Chesterfield to write his Characters. The little papers have the precision and formality of some old-fashioned minuet. Yet the symmetry is so natural to the artist that he can break it where he likes; it never becomes pinched and formal, as it would in the hands of an imitator. He can be sly; he can be witty; he can be sententious, but never for an instant does he lose his sense of time, and when the tune is over he calls a halt. 'He was fixed in the house of lords, that hospital of incurables.' He smiles: he does not laugh. Here the eighteenth century, of course, came to his help. Lord Chesterfield, though he was polite to everything, even to the stars and Bishop Berkeley's philosophy, firmly refused, as became a son of his age, to dally with infinity or to suppose that things are not quite as solid as they seem. The world was good enough and the world was

big enough as it was. This prosaic temper, while it keeps him within the bounds of impeccable common sense, limits his outlook. No single phrase of his reverberates or penetrates as so many of La Bruyère's do. But he would have been the first to deprecate any comparison with that great writer; besides, to write as La Bruyère wrote, one must perhaps believe in something, and then how difficult to observe the Graces! One might perhaps laugh; one might perhaps cry. Both are equally deplorable.

But while we amuse ourselves with this brilliant nobleman and his views on life we are aware, and the letters owe much of their fascination to this consciousness, of a dumb yet substantial figure on the farther side of the page. Philip Stanhope is always there. It is true that he says nothing, but we feel his presence in Dresden, in Berlin, in Paris, opening the letters and poring over them and looking dolefully at the thick packets which have been accumulating year after year since he was a child of seven. He had grown into a rather serious, rather stout, rather short young man. He had a taste for foreign politics. A little serious reading was rather to his liking. And by every post the letters came—urbane, polished, brilliant, imploring, and commanding him to learn to dance, to learn to carve, and to consider the management of his legs. He did his best. He worked very hard in the school of the Graces, but their service was too exacting. He sat down half-way up the steep stairs which lead to the glittering hall with all the mirrors. He could not do it. He failed in the House of Commons; he subsided into some small post in Ratisbon; he died untimely. He left it to his widow to break the news which he had lacked the heart or the courage to

tell his father—that he had been married all these years to a lady of low birth, who had borne him children.

The Earl took the blow like a gentleman. His letter to his daughter-in-law is a model of urbanity. He began the education of his grandsons. But he seems to have become a little indifferent to what happened to himself after that. He did not care greatly if he lived or died. But still to the very end he cared for the Graces. His last words were a tribute of respect to these goddesses. Some one came into the room when he was dying; he roused himself: 'Give Dayrolles a chair,' he said, and said no more.

W. B. YEATS

Emotion of Multitude

From IDEAS OF GOOD AND EVIL

I HAVE been thinking a good deal about plays lately, and I have been wondering why I dislike the clear and logical construction which seems necessary if one is to succeed on the Modern Stage. It came into my head the other day that this construction, which all the world has learnt from France, has everything of high literature except the emotion of multitude. The Greek drama has got the emotion of multitude from its chorus, which called up famous sorrows, long-leaguered Troy, much-enduring Odysseus, and all the gods and heroes to witness, as it were, some well-ordered fable, some action separated but for this from all but itself. The French play delights in the well-ordered fable, but by leaving out the chorus it has created an art where poetry and imagination, always the children of far-off multitudinous things, must of necessity grow less important than the mere will. This is why, I said to myself, French dramatic poetry is so often a little rhetorical, for rhetoric is the will trying to do the work of the imagination. The Shakespearian Drama gets the emotion of multitude out of the sub-plot which copies the main plot, much as a shadow upon the wall copies one's body in the firelight. We think of King Lear less as the history of one man and his sorrows than as the history of a whole evil time. Lear's shadow is in Gloster, who also has ungrateful children, and the mind goes on imagining other shadows, shadow beyond shadow till it has

pictured the world. In *Hamlet* one hardly notices, so subtly is the web woven, that the murder of Hamlet's father and the sorrow of Hamlet are shadowed in the lives of Fortinbras and Ophelia and Laertes, whose fathers, too, have been killed. It is so in all the plays, or in all but all, and very commonly the sub-plot is the main plot working itself out in more ordinary men and women, and so doubly calling up before us the image of multitude. Ibsen and Maeterlinck have on the other hand created a new form, for they get multitude from the Wild Duck in the Attic, or from the Crown at the bottom of the Fountain, vague symbols that set the mind wandering from idea to idea, emotion to emotion. Indeed all the great Masters have understood that there cannot be great art without the little limited life of the fable, which is always the better the simpler it is, and the rich, far-wandering, many-imaged life of the half-seen world beyond it. There are some who understand that the simple unmysterious things living as in a clear noon-light are of the nature of the sun, and that vague many-imaged things have in them the strength of the moon. Did not the Egyptian carve it on emerald that all living things have the sun for father and the moon for mother, and has it not been said that a man of genius takes the most after his mother?

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

ALPHA OF THE PLOUGH was the pen-name of GARDINER, ALFRED G. (1865-1946). Editor of the *Daily News* (1902-19). His published works include: *Pebbles on the Shore* (from which this essay is taken) (1916); *Prophets, Priests and Kings*; *Pillars of Society*; *The War Lords*; *Certain People of Importance*; *The Anglo-American Future*; *The Life of Sir Wm. Harcourt*; *The Life of George Cadbury* (1923), and *John Benn and the Progressive Movement* (1925).

BARING, THE HON. MAURICE (1874-1945), O.B.E. Educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge. In the Diplomatic Service in Paris, Copenhagen, and Rome. In the Foreign Office 1903-4. Served in the War 1914-19. His published works include: *The Puppet Show of Memory* (1922); *His Majesty's Embassy* (1923); *Collected Poems*; *Cat's Cradle* (1925); *Daphne Adeane* (1926); *Tinker's Leave* (1927); *The Coat without Seam* (1928); *Lost Lectures* (from which this essay is taken) (1932), and five later books, 1932-5.

BEERBOHM, SIR MAX (1872-1956), was born in London and educated at Charterhouse and Merton College, Oxford. His published works include: *The Works of Max Beerbohm* (1896-1922); *Caricatures of Twenty-Five Gentlemen* (1896); *The Happy Hypocrite* (1897, 1918, 1920); *More* (1899); *The Poet's Corner* (1904); *A Book of Caricatures* (1907); *Yet Again* (1909, 1923); *Zuleika Dobson*; *The Second Childhood of John Bull* (1911); *A Christmas Garland* (1912); *Fifty Caricatures* (1913); *Seven Men* (1919); *And Even Now* (from which this essay is taken) (1920); *A Survey* (1921); *Rossetti and His Circle* (1922); *Things New and Old* (1923), and *Observations* (1925).

BELLOC, JOSEPH HILAIRE PIERRE (1870-1953). The son of a French father and an English mother. Educated at the Oratory School, Edgbaston, and Balliol College, Oxford. Became a naturalized Englishman in 1903. Member of Parliament 1906-10. His published works include: *Path to Rome* (1902); *The Old Road* (1905); *Hills and the Sea* (from which this essay is taken) (1906); *General Sketch of the European War, 1st Phase* (1915), *2nd Phase* (1916); *The House of Commons and Monarchy* (1920); *Verses and Sonnets* (1924);

History of England, 4 vols. (1925-31); *Many Cities* (1928); *Joan of Arc* (1929); *New Cautionary Tales* (1930); *Essays of a Catholic Layman in England* (1931), and ten other books 1931-5.

BLUNDEN, EDMUND CHARLES (1896), C.B.E., M.C. Educated at Christ's Hospital and Queen's College, Oxford. Served in the War in France and Belgium. Awarded Hawthornden Prize 1922 and Benson Medal of the Royal Society of Literature 1930. Professor of English Literature at Tokyo University 1924-7. Fellow and Tutor in English Literature, Merton College, Oxford, since 1931. His published works include: *The Waggoner and Other Poems* (1920); *The Shepherd and Other Poems of Peace and War* (1922); *To Nature* (1923); *Undertones of War* (1928); *Poems* (1914-30); *Collected edition* (1930); *The Face of England* (1932), and *The Mind's Eye* (from which this essay is taken) (1932).

CARDUS, NEVILLE (1889). Educated at Manchester, London, Vienna. Coached Shrewsbury School Cricket (1912-16). Principal Music Critic and Cricket Writer of the *Manchester Guardian*. His published works include: *A Cricketer's Book* (1922); *Days in the Sun* (1924); *The Summer Game* (1929); *Cricket* (1930); *Good Days* (from which this essay is taken) (1934); he edited *Music Criticisms of Samuel Langford* (1929).

CHESTERTON, GILBERT KEITH (1874-1936). Born at Kensington, went to St. Paul's School, and studied for a time at the Slade School of Art. Became a journalist, and is well known as an essayist and writer upon literary and social subjects, and as a novelist, poet, and the author of two plays; *Magic* (1913), and *The Judgment of Dr. Johnson* (1927). His published works include: *Browning* (1903); *The Club of Queer Trades* (1905); *Charles Dickens* (1906); *The Man who was Thursday* (1908); *Tremendous Trifles* (1909); *The Ball and the Cross* (1910); *Manalive* (1912); *A Shilling for my Thoughts* (1916); *The New Jerusalem* (1920); *The Return of Don Quixote*; *R. L. Stevenson* (1927); *All is Grist* (from which this essay is taken) (1931), and eight other books, 1932-5.

DARWIN, BERNARD (1876), C.B.E. Educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge. Called to the Bar in 1903. Golf Correspondent to *The Times* and *Country Life*. Served in the War. Played golf for Cambridge 1895, 1896, 1897. Played eight times for England v.

Scotland—played for Great Britain v. America in 1922, and has twice been in semi-final of Amateur Championship. His published works include: *Golf Courses of Great Britain*; *Tee Shots and Others*; *Present Day Golf* (with George Duncan); *Golf and Some Hints and Suggestions*; *A Friendly Round*; *A Dickens Pilgrimage* (reprinted from *The Times*); *Elves and Princesses*; *Green Memories* (1928); *The Tale of Mr. Tootleoo and Tootleoo Two*; *The English Public School* (1929); *Second Shots* (from which this essay is taken) (1930); *Out of the Rough* (1932); *Dickens and W. G. Grace* (Great Lives Series) (1933-4), and *John Gully and his Times* (1935). Editor of the *Dickens Advertiser* (1930).

DE LA MARE, WALTER (JOHN) (1873-1956), O.M. Born in Kent. Educated at St. Paul's Cathedral Choir School, London. Reviewer for *The Times* and *Westminster Gazette*. His published works include: *Collected Poems* (1920); *The Veil and Other Poems*; *Memoirs of a Midget* (1921); *The Riddle* (from which this essay is taken) (1923); *Stuff and Nonsense* (1927); *Stories from the Bible* (1929); *The Fleeting and other Poems* (1933), and several novels and short stories.

ERVINE, ST. JOHN G. (1883), F.R.S.L. Dramatist and novelist. Professor of Dramatic Literature, Royal Society of Literature. Served in the War, wounded (1918). Manager Abbey Theatre, Dublin (1915). His published works include: *The Magnanimous Lover* (1907); *Mixed Marriage* (1910); *Jane Clegg* (1911); *John Ferguson* (1914); *Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary*; *The Wonderful Visit* (with H. G. Wells); *Some Impressions of my Elders* (from which this essay is taken) (1923); *The Mountain, and other stories* (1928); *Mrs. Martin's Man*; *Alice and a Family*; *Changing Winds*; *The Foolish Lovers*; *The Wayward Man*; *The First Mrs. Fraser*; *Sir E. Carson and the Ulster Movement*; *Parnell*; *The Organized Theatre*; *How to Write a Play*; *The Theatre in my Time*, and *Life of General William Booth called God's Soldier* (1934).

FRAZER, SIR JAMES GEORGE (1854-1941), F.R.S. (1920), O.M. (1925). Born at Glasgow. Educated at Cambridge, where he became Fellow of Trinity College. He was then called to the Bar (Middle Temple). He had honorary degrees at Oxford, Glasgow, Cambridge, Durham, Manchester, Paris, and Strasbourg. A Fellow of the British Academy, Hon. Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Corresponding Member of the Institut de France, Com-

mander of the Legion of Honour, Corresponding Member of the Prussian Academy of Science, and Extraordinary Member of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Science. His published works include: *The Golden Bough* (1890), in 12 volumes (many books connected with *The Golden Bough* were separately published); *Passages of the Bible chosen for their Literary Interest and Beauty* (1895); *Pausanias's Description of Greece*, translated with a commentary (1898); *Letters of William Cowper* (1912); *Essays of Joseph Addison* (1915); *The Gorgon's Head and Other Literary Pieces* (from which this essay is taken) (1927), and *Garnered Sheaves: Essays, Addresses, and Reviews* (1931).

GALSWORTHY, JOHN (1869-1933). O.M. (1929). Educated at Harrow and New College, Oxford. Travelled very extensively. Wrote a great number of novels, plays, and short stories, including the series beginning with *The Man of Property*; *The Silver Box* (1906); *Strife* (1909); *Justice* (1910); *The Inn of Tranquillity* (from which this essay is taken) (1912); *The Skin Game* (1920); *The Forsyte Saga*; *Loyalties* (1922); *The Forest* (1924); *Maid in Waiting*, and *Flowering Wilderness* (1932).

GOULD, GERALD (1885-1936). Educated at Norwich; University College, London, and Magdalen College, Oxford. 1st Class Hons. Classics (1905); Quain Prize Essayist (1908); 1st Class Lit. Hum. (1909); Fellow of University College, London (1906); Fellow of Merton College, Oxford (1909-16); Quain Student in English, University College, London (1909-13); Lecturer in English at Wren's (1910-15); leader writer on the *Daily Herald* (1915-19); Assistant Editor *Daily Herald* (1919-22). His published works include: *Lyrics* (1906); *Essay on the Nature of Lyric* (1909); *Poems* (1911); *My Lady's Book* (1913); *Monogamy*; *The Helping Hand* (1918); *The Happy Tree* (1919); *Lady Adela*; *The Coming Revolution*; *The Journey—Odes and Sonnets* (1920); *The Lesson of Black Friday* (1921); *The English Novel of To-day* (1924); *The Return to the Cabbage, and other Essays* (1926); *Beauty the Pilgrim—poems* (1927); *Collected Poems*; *The Musical Glasses*; *The Future of Laughter* (1929); *All about Women—Essays and Parodies* (1931); *Isabel* (1932); *Refuge from Nightmare and Other Essays* (from which this essay is taken) (1933), and numerous articles in the daily, weekly, and monthly press.

GRAHAM, ROBERT BONTINE CUNNINGHAME (1852-1936). Educated at Harrow. He was an M.P. for six years. He spent much of his early life in Spain, Mexico, and the Argentine Republic as a cattle farmer and a trader in horses and cattle. His published works include: *Mogreb-el-Aksa* (1898); *A Vanished Arcadia* (1901); *Progress* (from which this essay is taken) (1905); *Faith* (1909); *Hope* (1910); *Charity* (1912); *A Brazilian Mystic* (1920); *The Conquest of New Granada* (1922); *The Conquest of the River Plate* (1924), and *Pedro de Valdivia, Conqueror of Chile* (1926).

HADOW, SIR WILLIAM HENRY (1859-1937), C.B.E., LL.D., D.LITT., D.MUS. Educated at Malvern and Worcester College, Oxford, of which he was an Hon. Fellow. Principal of Armstrong College, Newcastle, 1909-19; Vice-Chancellor of Sheffield University 1919-1930. Director of Education on Lines of Communication in France 1918. Late Chairman of Consultative Committee, Board of Education. His published works include: *Studies in Modern Music* (1894-5); *A Croatian Composer* (1897); *Album of Songs* (1897, 1899, 1903, 1912); *Oxford Treasury of English Literature* (3 vols.) (1906, 1907, 1908); *Citizenship* (1923); *Music* (Home University Library) (1924), and *Collected Essays* (from which this essay is taken) (1928). He was editor of the *Oxford History of Music*.

HALDANE, JOHN BURDON SANDERSON (1892), F.R.S. Educated at Eton and New College, Oxford. Professor of Genetics, University College, London (1933). Head of Genetical Department, John Innes Horticultural Institution (1927). Served in the War—twice wounded. Fellow of New College (1919-22); Reader in Biochemistry, University of Cambridge (1922-32); Fullerian Professor of Physiology, Royal Institution (1930-32); Corresponding Member Société de Biologie (1928); President of Genetical Society (1932). His published works include: *Daedalus* (1924); *Callinicus* (1925); *Possible Worlds* (from which this essay is taken); *Animal Biology* (with J. S. Huxley) (1927); *Science and Ethics* (1928); *Enzymes* (1930); *The Inequality of Man and other Essays* (1932); *The Causes of Evolution* (1933); *Fact and Faith* (1934); and various articles in *Journal of Genetics*, *Journal of Physiology*, and *Proceedings of Cambridge Philosophical Society*.

HERBERT, SIR ALAN PATRICK (1890). Educated at Winchester (Exhibitioner) and New College, Oxford (Exhibitioner). 1st Class

Jurisprudence (1914). Served in the War. Called to the Bar, Inner Temple (1918). Private Secretary to Sir Leslie Scott, K.C., M.P. Began writing for *Punch* (1910); joined staff (1924); represented *Punch* at 3rd Imperial Press Conference, Melbourne (1925). His published works include: *The Bomber Gipsy*; *The Secret Battle*; *The House-by-the-River*; *Light Articles Only* (from which this essay is taken); *The Wherefore and the Why*; *Tinker, Tailor*; *The Man about Town*; *The Old Flame*; *The Blue Peter* (comic opera); *Laughing Ann*; *She Shanties*; *Riverside Nights* (with Nigel Playfair); *Plain Jane*; *Misleading Cases*, three series; *The Trials of Topsy*; *Topsy, M.P.*; *Honeybubble & Co.*; *La Vie Parisienne* (adaptation); *The Water Gipsies*; *Ballads for Broadbrows*; *No Boats on the River* (1932); *Holy Deadlock* (1934), and he has also written several librettos.

HUDSON, WILLIAM HENRY (1841-1922). Born in the Pampas of La Plata and educated at home by tutors. His health was wrecked by a severe attack of rheumatic fever, and in 1869 he came home to England and lived a life observing Nature and human nature in different parts of England and writing studies on these and his earlier experiences, novels, sketches, and short stories. His published works include: *The Purple Land* (1885); *Green Mansions* (1904); and *A Crystal Age* (1906.) Among his sketches and his studies of Nature are *British Birds* (1895); *Birds in London* (1898); *Birds and Man* (1901); *Hampshire Days* (1903); *Afoot in England* (1909); *A Shepherd's Life* (1910); *Adventures among Birds* (from which this essay is taken) (1913). In *Far Away and Long Ago* (1918) he gives a history of his early life.

HUXLEY, ALDOUS LEONARD (1894). Educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford. On the editorial staff of the *Athenaeum* (1919-20). Dramatic critic *Westminster Gazette* (1920-1). His published works include: *The Burning Wheel* (1916); *The Defeat of Youth* (1918); *Limbo*; *Leda* (1920); *Crome Yellow* (1921); *Mortal Coils* (1922); *On the Margin*; *Antic Hay* (1923); *Little Mexican* (1924); *Those Barren Leaves*; *Along the Road* (1925); *Two or Three Graces*; *Jesting Pilate* (1926); *Proper Studies* (from which this essay is taken) (1927); *Point Counter Point* (1928); *Do What You Will* (1929); *Brief Candles* (1930); *The World of Light*; *The Cicadas*; *Music at Night* (1931); *Brave New World*; *Texts and Pretexts* (1932); *Beyond the Mexique Bay* (1934), and *Eyeless at Gaza* (1936).

HUXLEY, JULIAN SORELL (1887). Educated at Eton (K.S.) and Balliol College, Oxford (Brackenbury Scholar). Newdigate Prizeman (1908); 1st in Natural Science (Zoology) (1909); Naples Scholar (1909-10); Lecturer in Zoology, Balliol College (1910-12); Research Associate of the Rice Institute (1912-13); Assistant Professor, Rice Institute, Houston, Texas, U.S.A. (1913-16); served in the War (1918); Fellow of New College and Senior Demonstrator in Zoology, Oxford (1919); helped organize and participated in Oxford University Expedition to Spitsbergen (1921); Professor of Zoology, at King's College, London (1925-7); Hon. Lecturer, King's College, London, 1927-35; President of National Union of Scientific Workers (1926-9); Fullerian Professor of Physiology in the Royal Institution (1926-9); Biological Editor, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 14th edition. Visited East Africa to advise on Native Education (1929). His published works include: *The Individual in the Animal Kingdom* (1911); *Essays of a Biologist* (from which this essay is taken) (1923); *The Stream of Life*; *Essays in Popular Science* (1926); *Religion without Revelation*; *Animal Biology* (with J. B. S. Haldane) (1927); *The Science of Life* (with H. G. and G. P. Wells) (1929); *Bird-Watching and Bird Behaviour* (1930); *Africa View*; *What Dare I Think?* (1931); *An Introduction to Science* (with E. N. da C. Andrade) (1931-2); *Problems of Relative Growth*; *The Captive Shrew and other Poems* (1932); *If I were Dictator* (1934), and *We Europeans* (with A. C. Haddon) (1935).

KNOX, EDMUND GEORGE VALPY (1881). Educated at Rugby and Corpus Christi College, Oxford. On the staff of *Punch* (1921). Editor of *Punch* (1932). Pen-name 'Evoe'. Served in the War. His published works include: *The Brazen Lyre*; *A Little Loot*; *Parodies Regained*; *These Liberties*; *Fiction as She is Wrote*; *An Hour from Victoria*; *Fancy Now*; *It Occurs to Me*; *Gorgeous Times* (from which this essay is taken); *Quaint Specimens*; *Awful Occasions*; *Poems of Impudence*; *I'll tell the World*; *Wonderful Outings*; *Here's Misery*; *Blue Feathers*; *This Other Eden*; *Things that Annoy Me*; *Slight Irritations*, and *Folly Callings*. He edited also an *Anthology of Humorous Verse*.

LUCAS, EDWARD VERRALL (1865-1938). Educated at Ackworth School and University College, London. Hon. LL.D., St. Andrews. Chairman of Messrs. Methuen & Co., Ltd., publishers. On the Staff of *Punch*, and writer of weekly letter in the *Sunday Times*. His published works include: *The Open Road* (1899); *Wisdom while you*

Wait (with C. L. Graves) (1903); *Over Bemertons* (1908); *Old Lamps for New* (from which this essay is taken) (1911); *Cloud and Silver* (1916); *A Boswell of Baghdad* (1917); *Verena in the Midst* (1920); *Encounters and Diversions* (1924), and *The Joy of Life* (1927). He has written a series of travel-books, some of which are *Highways and Byways in Sussex* (1904); *A Wanderer in Holland* (1905); *in London* (1906); *in Paris* (1909); *in Florence* (1912); *in Venice* (1914); *among Pictures* (1924), and *in Rome* (1926). His appreciation of Charles Lamb is well known. He wrote the standard *Life of Lamb*, and has edited *The Works and Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb*.

LYND, ROBERT (1879-1949). Educated at the Royal Academical Institution, Belfast, and Queen's College, Belfast. Literary Editor of the *News-Chronicle*, and writer on the *New Statesman*. His published works include: *Irish and English; Portraits and Impressions* (1908); *Home Life in Ireland* (1909); *Rambles in Ireland* (1912); *The Book of This and That* (1915); *If the Germans Conquered England, and other Essays* (1917); *Old and New Masters; Ireland a Nation* (1919); *The Passion of Labour* (1920); *The Art of Letters; The Pleasure of Ignorance* (1921); *The Sporting Life; Books and Authors; Solomon in all his Glory* (1922); *The Blue Lion* (1923); *The Peal of Bells* (1924); *The Money-Box* (from which this essay is taken) (1925); *The Orange Tree; The Little Angel* (1926); *The Goldfish* (1927); *Dr. Johnson and Company; The Green Man* (1928); *It's a Fine World* (1930); *Rain, Rain, Go to Spain* (1931); *The Cockleshell* (1933), and *Both Sides of the Road* (1934).

MACCARTHY, SIR DESMOND (1878-1952), LL.D., F.R.S.L. Educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge. Late editor of *Life and Letters*. Weekly contributor to the *Sunday Times*. Late Literary Editor of the *New Statesman*. His published works include: *Memoirs of Lady John Russell*, and *Remnants*. Collected Essays under the title of *Portraits* (1931), *Criticism* (1932), and *Experience* (1935). This essay is taken from the *Listener* (1935).

MILNE, ALAN ALEXANDER (1882-1956). Educated at Westminster and Trinity College, Cambridge. Served with the Royal Warwickshire Regiment during the European War. Edited *The Granta* (1920). Began journalistic work in London (1903). Assistant Editor of *Punch* (1906-14). His published works include: *The Day's Play* (1910); *The Holiday Round* (1912); *Once a Week* (1914);

Once on a Time (1917); *Not that it Matters* (1919); *If I May* (1920); *The Sunny Side* (1922); *When We were very Young* (1924); *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926); *By Way of Introduction* (from which this essay is taken) (1929); and among his plays are: *Make-Believe* (1918); *Mr. Pim Passes By* (1919); *The Romantic Age* (1920); *The Dover Road* (1922); *The Great Broxopp* (1923); *Ariadne* (1925); *The Ivory Door* (1927), and *Toad of Toad Hall* (1930).

MONTAGUE, CHARLES EDWARD (1867-1928). Educated at the City of London School and Balliol College, Oxford. Director of *Manchester Guardian*. Governor and Hon. graduate of University of Manchester. Served in the War. Awarded Royal Humane Society Bronze Medal for saving life from drowning. His published works include: *A Hind Let Loose* (1910); *Dramatic Values* (1911); *The Morning's War* (1913); *Disenchantment* (1922); *Fiery Particles* (1923); *The Right Place* (1924); *Rough Justice* (1926); *Right off the Map* (1927), and *A Writer's Notes on His Trade* (from which this essay is taken) (1929).

PONSONBY, LORD, OF SHULBREDE—ARTHUR AUGUSTUS WILLIAM HARRY (1871-1946). Educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford. Page of Honour to Queen Victoria (1882-7). In the Diplomatic Service at Constantinople (1894-7); Copenhagen (1898-9); in Foreign Office (1900-2); contested Taunton (1906). Principal Private Secretary to Prime Minister (1906-8); M.P. Stirling Burghs (1908-18); contested Dunfermline Burghs (1918); M.P. Brightside Division of Sheffield (1922-30); Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1924); Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Dominions (June-December, 1929); Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Transport (1929-31); Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster (1931); J.P. Sussex; Member of Council, Royal College of Music. His published works include: *The Camel and the Needle's Eye* (1909); *The Decline of Aristocracy* (1912); *Democracy and Diplomacy* (1915); *Wars and Treaties, 1815-1914* (1917); *Religion in Politics* (1921); *English Diaries* (1923); *Now is the Time* (1925); *More English Diaries*; *Scottish and Irish Diaries* (1927); *Samuel Pepys* (1928); *Casual Observations* (from which this essay is taken) (1929); *Queen Victoria* (1933), and *John Evelyn* (1934).

PRIESTLEY, JOHN BOYNTON (1894). Educated at Bradford Grammar School and Trinity Hall, Cambridge. Served in the War. His

published works include: *Brief Diversions*; *Papers from Lilliput* (1922); *I for One* (1923); *Figures in Modern Literature* (1924); *The English Comic Characters* (1925); *George Meredith* (English Men of Letters); *Talking* (1926); *Adam in Moonshine*; *Open House*; *Peacock* (English Men of Letters); *Benighted*; *The English Novel* (1927); *Apes and Angels* (from which this essay is taken); *English Humour* (1928); *Farthing Hall* (with Hugh Walpole); *The Good Companions*; *The Balconinny* (1929); *Town Major of Miraucourt*; *Angel Pavement* (1930); *Dangerous Corner*—a Play; *Faraway*; *Self-Selected Essays*; *Wonder Hero* (1933); *English Journey* (1934), and *They Walk in the City* (1936).

QUILLER-COUCH, SIR ARTHUR THOMAS (1863–1944), LITT.D. A Cornishman, educated at Clifton and Trinity College, Oxford, where he became Lecturer in Classics. From 1912 he held the King Edward VII's Professorship of English Literature at Cambridge. Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, and Hon. Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford. He was well known as a writer of tales and sketches, usually Cornish in setting, the earlier ones being published under the pseudonym of 'Q'. His published works include: *Troy Town* (1888); *The Ship of Stars* (1899), and *From a Cornish Window* (1906). He edited anthologies, *The Oxford Book of English Verse* (1900); *The Oxford Book of Ballads* (1910); *The Oxford Book of Victorian Verse* (1912); *The Pilgrim's Way*, and *The Oxford Book of Prose* (1925). He also published lectures, essays, and criticisms, including *On the Art of Writing* (1916); *Shakespeare's Workmanship* (1918, 1922); *On the Art of Reading* (1920); *Adventures in Criticism* (from which this essay is taken) (1924); and *Charles Dickens and Other Victorians* (1925). His three volumes of verse are *Green Bays* (1893); *Poems and Ballads* (1896), and *The Vigil of Venus* (1912).

SAINTSBURY, GEORGE EDWARD BATEMAN (1845–1933), F.B.A. Educated at King's College School, London and Merton College, Oxford. Hon. Fellow Merton College (1909); Assistant Master Manchester Grammar School (1868); Senior Classical Master Elizabeth College, Guernsey (1868–74); Headmaster Elgin Educational Institute (1874–6); Journalist in London (1876–95); Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature, Edinburgh University (1895–1915); Hon. LL.D. Aberdeen (1898); Hon. D.LITT., Durham (1906); President English Association (1909); Fellow British Academy (1911); Hon. D.LITT., Oxford (1912); Hon. LL.D.,

Edinburgh University (1919). His published works include: *Primer of French Literature* (1880); *Dryden* (in *English Men of Letters*) (1881); *Short History of French Literature*, and *French Lyrics* (1882); *Marlborough*, and *Specimens of English Prose Style* (1885); *Manchester, and Elizabethan Literature* (1887); *Essays in English Literature* (1890); *Essays on French Novelists* (1891); *Miscellaneous Essays*, and *The Earl of Derby* (1892); *Corrected Impressions*, and *Essays in English Literature* (2nd Series) (1895); *Nineteenth Century Literature* (1896); *The Flourishing of Romance and the Rise of Allegory*; *Sir Walter Scott* (1897); *A Short History of English Literature* (1898); *Matthew Arnold* (1899); *A History of Criticism* (vol. i, 1900), (vol. ii, 1902), (vol. iii, 1904); *The Earlier Renaissance* (1901); *Loci Critici* (1903); *Minor Caroline Poets* (vol. i, 1905), (vol. ii, 1906), (vol. iii, 1921); *History of English Prosody* (vol. i, 1906), (vol. ii, 1908), (vol. iii, 1910); *The Later Nineteenth Century* (1908); *A Historical Manual of English Prosody* (1910); *History of English Criticism* (1911); *History of English Prose Rhythm* (1912); *The English Novel* (1913); *A First Book of English Literature* (1914); *The Peace of the Augustans* (1915); *A History of the French Novel* (vol. i, 1917), (vol. ii, 1919); *Notes on a Cellar-Book* (1920); *A Letter-book and A Scrap-book* (1923); *Collected Essays and Papers* (from which this essay is taken) (4 vols.); *A Last Scrap Book* (1924); and *A Consideration of Thackeray* (1931).

SAMPSON, GEORGE (1873-1950). Educated at Southwark P.T. School and Winchester Training College. Inspector of Schools to the London County Council. Late Hon. General Secretary, English Association. Member Departmental Committee on English Studies. Member Cambridge Advisory Committee on Religious Instruction. His published works include: *English for the English* (from which this essay is taken) (1921); *Stopford Brooke's Primer of English Literature* (continuation) (1924) and *Cambridge Lessons in English* (1926-9). He also edited the works of George Berkeley, 3 vols. (1897-8); *Burke's French Revolution* (1900); *Newman's University Sketches*; *Newman's Select Essays*; *Lyrical Ballads*; *More's Utopia and Roper's Life of More* (1903); *Walton's Lives*; *The Golden Asse* (of Apuleius); *George Herbert's Poems*; *Keats*, 2 vols.; *Works of Emerson*, 5 vols. (1904); *Selections from Lamb, Goldsmith and Disraeli*, 3 vols. (1908); *Bagehot's Essays*, 2 vols. (1911); *Nineteenth Century Essays* (1912); *Hazlitt's Essays* (1917); *Cambridge Readings in Literature*, 5 vols. (1918); *Coleridge's Biographia Literaria* and

Wordsworth's Essays (with Quiller-Couch), (1920); *Methuen's English Classics*, 6 vols. (1922); *Much Ado about Nothing* (1923); *The Cambridge Book of Verse and Prose*; *Hamlet* (1924); *Cambridge Studies in Literature* (revised 8 vols.) (1932-3); *Romeo and Juliet* (1935).

SCOTT, DIXON (1881-1915). Clerk in a Bank at Liverpool. Awarded a Fellowship at Liverpool University. Lieutenant in the R.F.A. Died of dysentery at Gallipoli on 23 October 1915. Reviewed books for the *Liverpool Courier* and the *Manchester Guardian*. Contributed Essays in Criticism to the *Bookman*, e.g. on Henry James, Bernard Shaw, and Rudyard Kipling. His collected essays were published under the title of *Men of Letters* (from which this essay is taken) (1916) after his death, with an introduction by Max Beerbohm. Another collection appeared in 1917 under the title of *A Number of Things*.

SQUIRE, SIR JOHN COLLINGS (1884). Educated at Blundell's School and St. John's College, Cambridge. Member of the Academic Committee of the Royal Society of Literature and Hon. Secretary (1922). Hon. A.R.I.B.A. Chairman of Committee of the English Association. He founded the *London Mercury*, of which he was editor (1919-34). He is eminent as a literary critic and is a frequent contributor to the *Sunday Times*. He has also written poems, parodies, essays, and other prose. He is the editor of the *Cambridge Book of Lesser Poets* (1927). His published works include: *Books in General*, 3 series (1918, 1920-1); *Collected Parodies* (1921); *Grub Street Nights* (1924); *Poems in One Volume* (1926); *Life at the Mermaid* (from which this essay is taken) (1927); *Memories and Reflections*, and *Shakespeare as a Dramatist* (1935).

STRACHEY, GILES LYTTON (1880-1933), LL.D. Educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. His published works include: *Landmarks in French Literature* (1912); *Eminent Victorians* (1918); *Queen Victoria* (1921); *Books and Characters* (1922); *Pope* (1925), and *Portraits in Miniature* (from which this essay is taken) (1932).

THOMAS, SIR WILLIAM BEACH (1868-1957), K.B.E. Educated at Shrewsbury and Christ Church, Oxford. President of O.U.A.C. War correspondent, *Daily Mail*. Correspondent to the *Observer* and *Spectator*. His published works include: *From a Hertfordshire*

Cottage; The English Year; With the British on the Somme; A Traveller in News (1925); *Athletics* (Isthmian Library); *The Story of the Spectator, 1828-1928* (1928); *The Happy Village; A Letter to my Dog; The Yeoman's England* (1934), and *The Squirrel's Granary* (1936). (This essay is taken from the *Observer*, June 1931.)

TOMLINSON, H. M. (1873). Was for many years on the Staff of the *Morning Leader* and the *Daily News*. Was War correspondent in Belgium and France (1914) and an official correspondent at General Head-quarters of the British Army in France (1915-16). Literary editor of the *Nation and Athenaeum* (1917-23). His published works include: *The Sea and the Jungle* (1912); *Old Junk* (1918); *London River* (1921); *Waiting for Daylight* (1922); *Tidemarks* (1924); *Under the Red Ensign; Gifts of Fortune* (1926); *Gallions Reach* (1927); *All our Yesterdays* (1930); *Out of Soundings* (from which this essay is taken) (1931), and *Mars his Idiot* (1935).

TREVELYAN, GEORGE MACAULAY (1876), O.M., C.B.E., LL.D., LITT.D., F.B.A. Third son of Sir George Trevelyan, nephew of Macaulay, and the author of the *Early Life of Charles James Fox* and other historical works. Educated at Harrow and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he held a Fellowship. He served during the War as Commandant of the First British Ambulance Unit for Italy. Professor of History at Cambridge from 1927. His published works include: *England in the Age of Wycliffe* (1899); *The Poetry and Philosophy of George Meredith* (1906); *Garibaldi*, 3 vols. (1907-11); an edition of *English Songs of Italian Freedom* (1911); *The Life of John Bright; Clio, a Muse* (volume of essays) (from which this essay is taken) (1913); *History of England* (1926), and *England under Queen Anne*, 3 vols. (1930, 1932, 1934).

WADDELL, HELEN (1889), Hon. D.LITT. (Durham). Educated at Victoria College and Queen's University, Belfast. Member of Somerville College, Oxford (1920-2). Cassell Lecturer for St. Hilda's Hall, Oxford (1921). Lecturer Bedford College, London (1922-3). Held Susette Taylor Fellowship from Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, in Paris (1923-5). Awarded A. C. Benson Silver Medal by the Royal Society of Literature (1927). Elected Fellow (1928). Her published works include: *The Wandering Scholars* (1927); 'John Salisbury' in *Essays and Studies* (1928); *Medieval Latin*

Lyrics (1929); *Peter Abelard*; *The Abbé Prévost* (1933); *Lyrics from the Chinese* (1913); *A Book of Medieval Latin for Schools*; *Introduction to the Paris and Blecheley Diaries of Rev. William Cole*; Translation of *Manon Lescaut* (1931); *Beasts and Saints* (1934), and *The Desert Fathers* (1936). (This essay was taken from the *Nation*, January, 1918.)

WOOLF, MRS. ADELINE VIRGINIA (1882-1941). Younger daughter of Sir Leslie Stephen. Educated at home. Married Leonard Woolf (1912). Her published works include: *The Voyage Out* (1915); *Night and Day* (1919); *Jacob's Room* (1922); *Mrs. Dalloway*; *The Common Reader* (1925); *Orlando*; *A Room of One's Own* (1929); *The Waves* (1931); *The Common Reader*, 2nd Series (from which this essay is taken) (1932), and *Flush* (1933).

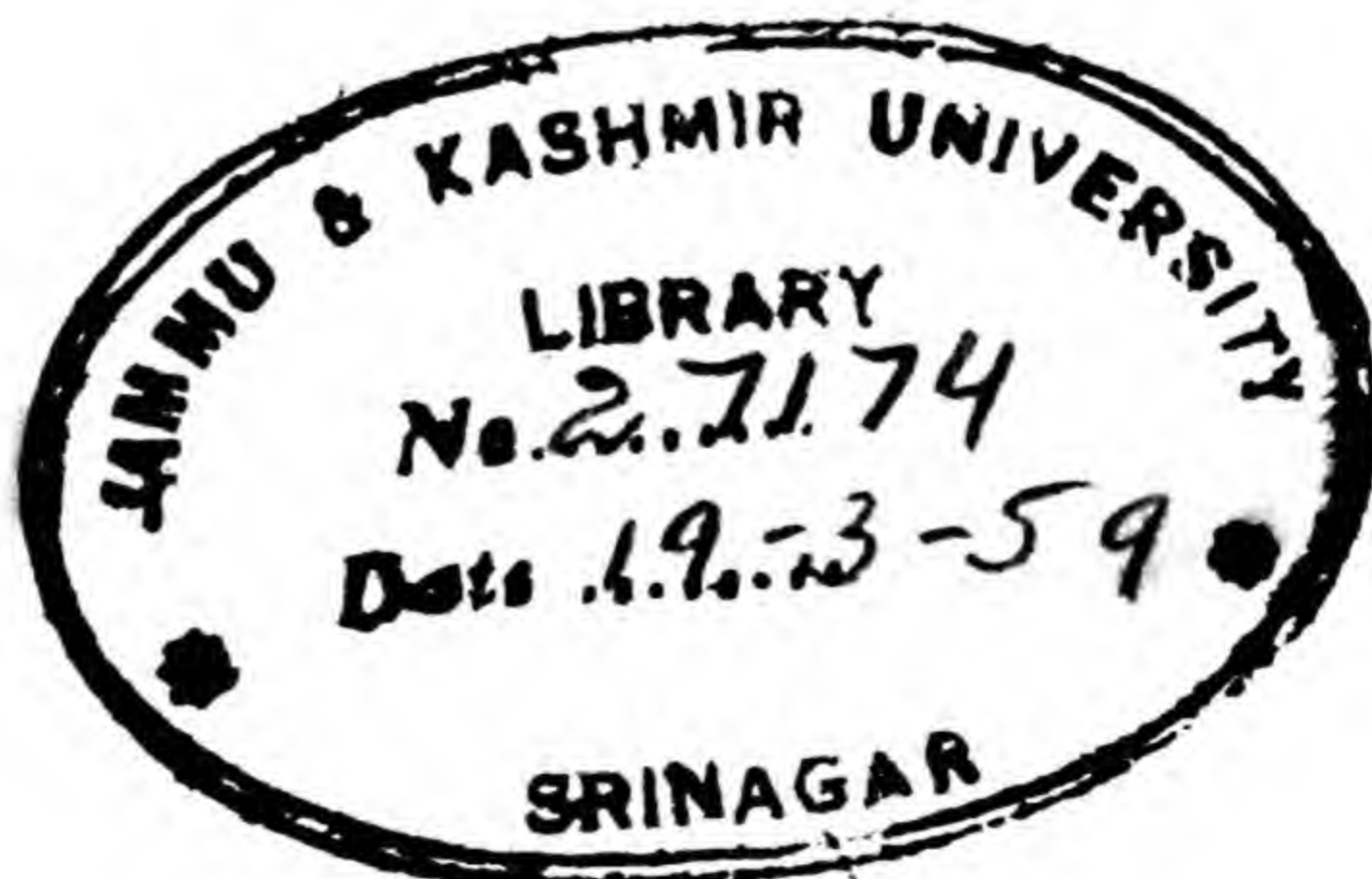
YEATS, WILLIAM BUTLER (1865-1939), D.LITT., LL.D. Born in Dublin. Educated at Godolphin School, Hammersmith, and Erasmus Smith School, Dublin. Studied Art in Dublin. Helped to establish the Irish National Theatre in 1899 for which he wrote *Plays for an Irish Theatre* (1912). Senator of the Irish Free State since 1922. A collected edition of his works appeared in eight volumes in 1908, and in six volumes in 1925-6. Awarded Nobel Prize for Literature (1923). His published works include: *Ideas of Good and Evil* (from which this essay is taken) (1903); *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* (1918); *The Wild Swans at Coole*; *The Cutting of an Agate* (1919); *Four Plays for Dancers* (1921); *Later Poems* (1923); *Selected Poems, Lyrical and Dramatic*; *The Winding Stair* (1929); *Words for Music, perhaps* (1932); *Collected Poems* (1933); *Wheels and Butterflies*; *Collected Plays* (1934), and *Dramatis Personae, 1896-1902* (1936).



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